DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 329 836	CG 023 206

AUTHOR	D'Onofrio, Carol
TITLE	Tobacco Talk: Educating Young Children about Tobacco. Suggestions for Teachers, Parents, and Other Care Providers of Children to Age 10.
REPORT NO	ISBN-1-56071-052-7
PUB DATE	91
NOTE	174p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Network Publications, 1700 Mission St., Suite 203, P.O. Box 1830, Santa Cruz, CA 95061-1830 ($14.95).
PUB TYPE	Guides - General (050)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Advertising; Children; Drug Education; Elementary Education; Health Education; *Prevention; *Smoking; *Tobacco; *Young Children

ABSTRACT

This book provides adults with specific suggestions and advice for talking with children about the health and social hazards of tobacco use. The first two chapters provide background information and general principles for talking about tobacco with children up to the age of 10. Each of the following five chapters focuses on one topic about tobacco and presents suggestions for talking about that topic in detail. Chapter 3 uses children's natural aversion to tobacco to describe what the substance is, and to point out that most people don't like to be around tobacco. Chapter 4 encourages children to trust their senses about smoke in their environment, and teaches them some ways to be assertive about their rights not to be around tobacco. Chapter 5 focuses on why anyone would use tobacco. Chapter 6 provides ways to talk to children about what using tobacco can do to the body, and how using it can limit choices about friends, money, and where one can sit in restaurants. Finally, chapter 7 introduces children to simple advertising techniques. Discussion shows how these techniques are used in tobacco advertising, and points out ways to keep from being fooled by the ads. An annotated list of 16 resource organizations is provided. (LLL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED329836

TOBACCO TALK

EDUCATING YOUNG CHILDREN ABOUT TOBACCO

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Carol D'Onofrio, DrPH

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Steven Bignell

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CG023206

Suggestions for teachers, parents and other care providers of children to age 10

TOBACCO TALK

EDUCATING YOUNG CHILDREN ABOUT TOBACCO

Carol N. D'Onofrio, DrPH

Suggestions for teachers, parents and other care providers of children to age 10

Network Publications, a division of ETR Associates
Santa Cruz, CA
1991

© 1991 by Network Publications, a division of ETR Associates.
All rights reserved. Published by Network Publications,
P.O. Box 1830, Santa Cruz, CA 95061-1830.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in the United States of America

Illustrations by Marcia Quackenbush

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

D'Onofrio, Carol.
Tobacco talk : educating young children about tobacco / Carol N. D'Onofrio.
p. cm.
"Suggestions for teachers, parents and other care providers of children to age 10"—T.p.
ISBN 1-56071-052-7
1. Tobacco habit—Prevention—Study and teaching (Primary)—United States. 2. Smoking—Prevention—Study and teaching (Primary)—United States. I. Title.
HV5765.D66 1991
372.3'7—dc20 91-7
CIP

Title No. 508

For all children, with the dream that every one will be nurtured by adults who care enough to talk with them freely about important issues in their lives and in society.

—C.N.D.

Contents

Acknowledgments vii

Introduction and Overview 1

- *Tobacco in Children's Lives* 2
- *Mixed Messages* 3
- *Current Prevention Approaches* 5
- *The Need to Talk* 6
- *Purpose of This Book* 7
- *Who Is This Book For?* 8
- *The Challenge of Being Honest* 8
- *If You Smoke or Chew...* 10
- *How to Use This Book* 12
- *Secret Ingredients* 15

Chapter 1. Learning to Use Tobacco 17

- *Stages of Learning* 18
- *What Makes Children Smoke?* 21
- *The Developmental Path* 26
- *Other Risky Behaviors* 27

Chapter 2. Talking Them Out of Starting 30

- *Four Prevention Strategies* 31
- *A Tobacco-Free Environment* 32
- *Give Clear, Consistent Messages* 33
- *Sorting Out Conflicting Messages* 34
- *Helping Children Grow and Develop* 36
- *Readiness for Learning* 39
- *Children and Rules* 40
- *The Home, School and Community* 42

Chapter 3. Tobacco *Is* Yucky Stuff 43

- *Goals of Communication* 44
- *Starting the Talk* 44

What to Say 45
Activities 50
Special Issues 55
Messages to Reinforce 57

Chapter 4. I Don't Like to Be Around It 58
Goals of Communication 59
Starting the Talk 59
What to Say 60
Activities 66
Special Issues 71
Messages to Reinforce 73

Chapter 5. Why Do People Smoke and Chew? 74
Goals of Communication 75
Starting the Talk 75
What to Say 77
Activities 86
Special Issues 89
Messages to Reinforce 92

Chapter 6. What Do Smoking and Chewing Do to You? 93
Goals of Communication 94
Starting the Talk 94
What To Say 96
Activities 109
Special Issues 120
Messages to Reinforce 120

Chapter 7. It Looks Like Fun in Pictures 121
Goals of Communication 122
Starting the Talk 122
What to Say 123
Activities 142
Special Issues 147
Messages to Reinforce 149

References 151

Resources 152

Acknowledgments

This book weaves together threads of ideas and firmer convictions about tobacco use prevention that have developed over a decade. The writings of many scholars have been influential in this thinking, as have been seminars and discussions with numerous colleagues at Berkeley and throughout the United States. While the list of such contributors is too lengthy to mention all by name, special thanks for stimulating dialogue over the years are extended to Drs. Allan Best, Tony Biglan, Gayle Boyd, Marc Braverman, David Buchanan, Martin Covington, Phil Cowan, Joe Cullen, Brian Flay, Jewelle Gibbs, Thomas Glynn, Ellen Gritz, Nadine Lambert, Joel Moskowitz, Art Peterson, Herb Severson, and Herbert Thier.

Casual observations, incidental conversations, and serious discussions about tobacco in the "real world" have provided a continuing counterpoint to academic thinking. Important contributors to this book thus also include countless children, parents, teachers, health professionals, and other friends with whom I have interacted in the course of daily life. The 4-H club members who wrote to me as "Dear Gabby" deserve particular recognition, for their letters alerted me to the fact that tobacco education programs do not respond to many of children's concerns about smoking and chewing. Replying to this correspondence first engaged me in the challenge of explaining very complex issues in terms that children can understand.

In proposing that I write this book, Kay Clark of ETR enticed me with the opportunity to translate all this background into a resource that adults who care for children would find useful. Her enthusiasm and energy for this project, her knowledge of the field, and her professional editorial skills have been instrumental both in shaping the book's content and in keeping its production on schedule.

Another salute of gratitude goes to Dr. Thomas Houston, Director of the Department of Preventive Medicine of the American Medical Association, for reviewing this manuscript with a special eye on its scientific accuracy. As readers of earlier drafts, Susan Johnson and Elana Reinen provided encouragement and important insights reflected in revisions. Always ready to provide able assistance, Judy Porat was especially helpful in gathering information to round out the *Resources* section.

The love and influence of Lisa and Michael D'Onofrio permeate this book. Talking with them has been a joy and a continual source of learning from their very first gurgles through all their growing years. Together and with friends, they have helped me appreciate children's wit, wisdom, and remarkable astuteness of observation. As this book was being written, they took on extra duties to give me extra work time, and they cheered every stage of progress. In addition, Mike and his friend, John Ynostroza acted as a sounding board and offered advice on several specific issues.

Two other family members have contributed to this book in very special, but very different ways. Grace A. Neisess, my mother, gifted me with her lifelong love of children, concern for their welfare, and faith in their potential. These values have provided the loom for weaving the fabric of this manuscript. Sara, our cat, kept me constant company at the computer, sometimes purring on my lap, sometimes daring me to disturb her nap on top of reference material, and occasionally injecting her own "pussanality" into the text by padding across the keyboard. Her persistence in enjoying my writing process gave me much pleasure.

Introduction and Overview

Mike excitedly finds his seat at the ballpark. At last he's going to see a major league game! His eyes dance across the diamond on the field of green to the players waiting in the dugout. He inspects the crowd, the vendors, and then the giant scoreboard. A giant Marlboro sign is right next to it.

Shauna smiles happily at her mother in the restaurant. What fun! Shopping and now a stop for ice cream. Suddenly, her nose wrinkles. What is that terrible smell? It's making her dizzy. It's smoke, coming right at her! The woman two tables away just lit a cigarette.

John pauses in his race to the playground. What's that shiny thing in the bushes? He leans closer and sees a round tin can, just like the big guys carry in their back pockets. Those guys look really cool. He's always wondered about the stuff they call "chew." Maybe there's a little bit left in the can. He'd like to see how it tastes.

Tyrone is mad and he's scared. Why won't his mom stop smoking! She knows it's bad for her. What will happen to him if she gets sick and dies? He grabs her cigarettes, then breaks them one by one and flushes the whole mess down the toilet.

Maria coughs as she opens the car door. She wishes she didn't live so far away from school. If she lived closer, she could walk and wouldn't have to ride with her uncle. He always smokes, and the car stinks.

Jennifer is stuck on a math problem, but Miss Grayson is walking around the classroom to see who needs help. Jennifer puts up her hand, and Miss Grayson leans over to check her work. Jennifer can smell her breath. She must have smoked during her teacher's break! Wow! She can't wait to tell the other kids at recess.

Susan watches her mother carefully select a few groceries at the store. Bread, eggs, beans—the usual things. She points to a can of frozen orange juice, but Mom shakes her head no. Money is tight and they have to watch every penny. But at the checkout counter, Mom buys two packs of cigarettes.

Chris dreads going to see Grandpa, but his parents say he must. These visits are always sad. They used to be fun, but now Grandpa is too sick to play or even tell jokes. He looks terrible too, all yellow and skinny. Chris thinks he's dying, but nobody will talk about it. Why does Grandpa still smoke?

Tobacco in Children's Lives

Exposure to cigarette smoking and other forms of tobacco use is a part of every child's life. The nature and frequency of this exposure, of course, differ for different children. The particular concerns that children have about tobacco therefore also differ.

Many children are bothered by cigarette smoke, but don't know how to avoid it. Children who have heard about the health hazards of tobacco use often worry about smoking by parents or other people they love.

Children are also curious about tobacco and the many forms it comes in. They realize that people must use tobacco for some reason and they wonder what it is. They want to know what kinds of people use each type of tobacco and how, when, where, and why they use it. They wonder if they should try it, and what will happen if they do.

As children learn about tobacco, they confront one paradox after another. How can cigarette smoking upset some people so much when it appears to give others a lot of pleasure? Why do some people say you shouldn't smoke cigarettes when it looks like so much fun in pictures? Why do people buy a product if it can hurt them and why are stores permitted to sell it?

These issues raise questions and dilemmas that go far beyond tobacco. What rights do children have? How do they make their feelings known to adults? Can children gain some control over their environment? Can they influence adults whose decisions affect them?

Why do grown-ups do things that harm their health? How would the family manage if a parent became sick and died? Do adults always know what is best? Do they practice what they preach? Can they be trusted to tell the truth? When should children find things out for themselves?

Mixed Messages

Teachers, parents, and other adults who talk with children about tobacco usually have one goal uppermost in their minds—to prevent them from using the substance, either now or in the future. This goal is important, for cigarette smoking is the most important preventable cause of disease and premature death in this country. Cigarette smoke even damages the health of nonsmokers. Using other tobacco products also has negative health consequences.

However, there is ample evidence that simply giving children the facts about the dangers of using tobacco won't keep them from smoking and chewing. Young children have difficulty understanding that using tobacco now can cause serious health problems many years later. The future seems very distant. Moreover, children tend to regard themselves as invulnerable.

Helping children learn about the health hazards of using tobacco is further complicated by a barrage of planned and unintended messages in the social environment. These messages encourage cigarette smoking, and more recently the use of chewing tobacco and snuff.

Children are exposed to thousands of advertisements for tobacco in the course of a year. Advertising associates smoking and chewing with good looks, good times, and good health. Although the law requires each ad to include a warning message, this message is presented in tiny type at the corner of the picture. Compared to the excitement and color of the ad, the warning appears dull and unimportant.

The ready availability of tobacco sends a message too. Tobacco is sold in grocery stores, drug stores, convenience stores, restaurants, and vending machines. It's everywhere. The message is that many people use tobacco and like it. Children and even adults find it hard to believe that a product so available could be harmful.

The behavior of people whom children love and admire sends even more powerful messages. Sometimes parents and teachers who tell children not to smoke are smokers themselves. Many coaches chew tobacco, and children who watch baseball on television are sure to see some of their favorite players spit tobacco juice as they wind up on the mound or step up to the plate.

Although the proportion of U.S. adults who smoke has declined steadily since the landmark 1964 report to the Surgeon General on the health hazards of smoking, an estimated 29 percent of U.S. adults still smoke. An additional five percent of adult males use smokeless tobacco, and about nine percent smoke pipes or cigars. Children don't have to look far to find role models who use tobacco.

Messages warning children not to use tobacco thus are contradicted by other persuasive messages throughout American society. Some people say smoking is bad, but some good people smoke. Some say smoking harms health, but many smokers seem fine. Some people hate cigarette smoke, but others appear to enjoy it. Some people say chewing tobacco is bad for you, but others say it's harmless. These contradictions are confusing to young children.

Current Prevention Approaches

Educating young people about tobacco is widely recognized as central to tobacco prevention efforts. Although most children don't experiment with smoking and chewing until late childhood or early adolescence, some children first use tobacco at age five or even younger. Others develop attitudes early in childhood that predispose them to experiment with tobacco as they grow older.

Experts generally agree that efforts to prevent tobacco use should begin at an early age. To date, however, relatively few resources have been developed to help teach young children about tobacco.

The majority of tobacco education programs for youth are designed for preteens and young adolescents. Many teach about social influences that promote tobacco use, and ways to resist them. Some of these programs have demonstrated modest success in delaying the initiation of tobacco use during the early teenage years. However, their content, methods and materials are not developmentally appropriate for children under the age of 10.

Some smoking education materials are available for elementary school grades. These include films, games, songs, posters, and other approaches to help children appreciate themselves and to teach them that cigarette smoking harms the body.

Some of these materials help teach children in the early elementary grades about the heart and lungs, thus laying the foundation for more thorough teaching when children are older about the health consequences of tobacco use. All provide a strong message against smoking. Unfortunately, these resources include almost nothing about smokeless tobacco (chewing tobacco and snuff), despite the fact that use of these products by youth has dramatically increased.

Current approaches to teaching young children about tobacco suffer from another, more serious limitation. They don't address the myriad of children's questions and concerns about tobacco use. Emphasizing anti-smoking messages only tells part of the tobacco story. Children know there is more to learn.

Finally, current prevention approaches consist of a few hours of instruction during the school year, at best. As a result, brief, concentrated messages not to smoke cigarettes are periodically added to the jumble of confusing information about tobacco from the social environment. Children are left to unscramble these mixed messages on their own.

The Need to Talk

Preventing children from using tobacco requires continuous communication with them while they are young. However, just telling children not to use tobacco quickly results in one-way communication.

If the subject of tobacco only triggers adults to deliver messages against smoking and chewing, children's hopes of discussing their own concerns will quickly be diminished. The same old messages will soon become familiar. As children conclude they've already heard what's being said, they stop listening. This narrowing of communication about tobacco can affect other types of talk, eventually damaging the quality of the adult-child relationship.

Children are interested in smoking and chewing for very different reasons than adults. So talk about tobacco needs to involve genuine interaction between you and the children you care for. Such communication needs to be ongoing so you can help children recognize the confused messages they encounter in their everyday lives—and unscramble them.

By encouraging young children to share their questions and observations about tobacco, you can determine what youngsters are learning from the world around them and how they interpret this information. With this awareness, you can adjust your prevention messages to children's level of understanding and readiness for learning.

Delivering messages about tobacco is only a minor part of the job in prevention. Even more important tasks are helping children understand the multiple roles tobacco plays in the social world and teaching them skills that help them confront and resolve tobacco-related issues as their world expands. Children need to be encouraged to voice their questions and concerns about tobacco. And adults need to discuss these matters with children thoughtfully and honestly.

Purpose of This Book

This book is aimed at helping adults talk about tobacco with young children in ways that contribute to the prevention of tobacco use behavior. While no sure preventive measure has yet been found, we do understand tobacco use sufficiently to identify some key components of prevention and to suggest some promising approaches for the education of young children. This body of knowledge is one foundation for the practical guidance offered in this book. Other important foundations are knowledge about communication and child development.

The book builds on these foundations by providing suggestions for informal talk about tobacco that adults and children can share in the course of their everyday interaction. Since this book is a resource, not a curriculum, it envisions educating young children about tobacco through a variety of informal conversations rather than through a single encounter or a planned series of discussions.

The book further assumes that some of these conversations will be initiated by adults, while others will be started by children. Although adults and children may initiate talk about tobacco for very different reasons, the interactive conversation that follows can and should contribute to tobacco use prevention in many ways. Helping that happen is the purpose of this book.

Who Is This Book For?

Talking about tobacco with young children is likely to be most effective when discussion occurs on many occasions over an extended period of time in many different contexts. This book therefore is written primarily for adults who have a continuing relationship with children.

The book is especially intended for teachers of students in kindergarten or the early elementary grades, regardless of whether they are implementing a tobacco prevention program, incidentally teaching about tobacco while presenting other subject matter, or responding to children's questions.

Parents who wonder where, when, and how to talk with their young children about tobacco can also look to this book for guidance and specific suggestions about what to say, as well as when and how to proceed.

Other adults who plan to talk with children about tobacco or who find themselves put on the spot by children's questions may find the book a useful resource. Such adults might include relatives, neighbors, and friends, as well as day care providers, pediatricians, nurses, community health care workers, Sunday school teachers, and leaders of out-of-school children's groups such as Camp Fire, Scouts, or 4-H.

Even adults whose contact with young people is limited may wish to consult this book if they have occasional contact with youngsters who are likely to ask questions about this subject. Substitute teachers, guest speakers in elementary school classrooms, and hosts for children's field trips can all contribute to children's education about tobacco if they are well prepared.

The Challenge of Being Honest

Even if you pride yourself on being truthful with children you may find that talking about tobacco frequently challenges your capacity for candor. Sometimes the challenge involves formulating simple, yet accurate ways to explain very complex information. Sometimes it requires deciding how much of your own experience to reveal or how far to go in discussing with children the behavior and values of others. Sometimes it means confronting contradictions in society that youngsters see clearly but that you have come to take for granted.

Although responding to children's questions about tobacco poses some difficult dilemmas, finding effective ways around them is important for many reasons. One of the most important reasons is that children need help sorting through conflicting messages that they encounter in their everyday lives.

Children's questions about tobacco are often related to deeper dilemmas they face in their struggle to understand a complex world and their place in it. Thoughtful, honest responses to their questions can help them sort out their problems, develop their own identity, and increase their confidence and skills in problem-solving. Nurturing these qualities is critical not only in preventing tobacco use, but in fostering children's healthy learning and development in a more general sense.

Responding frankly to children's questions about tobacco can help build strong relationships between children and the adults who care for them. Through open conversations about smoking and chewing, you can teach children that you will listen to their concerns and respect their viewpoints.

Talking about tobacco can also provide you with opportunities to show children that you will tell the truth about sensitive issues and help them work out problems that don't have easy answers. Gaining children's trust on these matters can help you guide their decision-making not only about tobacco use, but also about many other issues they confront as they grow up.

If You Smoke or Chew...

If you smoke cigarettes or use other tobacco products, you face some special issues in talking with children about tobacco.

The fact that you are reading this book suggests that you think children should be discouraged from using tobacco. You also may agree that children will be healthier if they are not exposed to smoke from other people's cigarettes. These premises are cornerstones for the content of this book, and they are supported by a great deal of scientific evidence.

As a tobacco user, you probably are well acquainted with scientific findings on the health hazards of smoking and chewing. You also know from direct experience that cigarette smoking and other forms of tobacco use are addictive and that quitting is not easy. By sharing your personal story, you can help children learn some important lessons about tobacco.

Children may ask you why you smoke or chew when you know that tobacco use is harmful. Answering this question requires honest self appraisal. If you respond thoughtfully and truthfully, you will help children learn an even more crucial lesson. Finding rational explanations for tobacco use is difficult. And children may not like the explanations that you give.

You may be tempted to conceal your smoking or chewing from them. But beware! Hiding tobacco use is very difficult. Children are remarkable students of adult behavior, and sooner or later one of them will see you smoking or chewing, hear about it from someone else, or detect a telltale shred of evidence.

If you don't tell children about your tobacco use, they're likely to find out anyway. With this discovery will come disillusion. You haven't been honest. You've been telling them not to do something that you yourself secretly do. Discovery of this deception can lead children to believe you might deceive them in other ways.

Worse, since you weren't truthful with them, children may conclude they don't have to be truthful with you. Such outcomes can damage the quality of communication between you, and your relationship with one another. It is far better to be "up front" about your tobacco use from the beginning.

You may worry that children will regard your smoking or chewing as a weakness. Don't dwell on this. Children are bound to discover sooner or later that you aren't perfect. You can help children learn this difficult lesson by talking with them frankly about your tobacco use.

Such conversations also can help children learn that they may not always agree with adult decisions, and that even adults don't always do what is best. Talk like this provides a good opportunity to point out that because you love children, you want to help them avoid some of the problems you've encountered.

Perhaps you are concerned that your smoking or chewing provides a role model for tobacco use that children will imitate. Considerable evidence indicates that you are probably right. If possible, try to avoid smoking or chewing in children's presence.

If you are like most tobacco users, you would like to quit. Perhaps this is a good time to do it. If you decide that it is, tell the children in your life how they can help.

If you are irritable while quitting, or if you backslide, use your experience to show children how very addictive tobacco use can be. A smoker or chewer who wants to quit but who can't do it easily provides a powerful demonstration of why it's best never to start smoking or chewing.

Most smokers and chewers make repeated attempts before they are able to quit. Show children that determination and persistence pay off by sticking with your cessation program until you are tobacco free. As you reach milestones of progress, such as not using tobacco for a day, a week, a month, or a year, do something special with your youngsters to celebrate.

If you aren't yet ready to quit, be honest with children about this too. Let children express their feelings about your tobacco use. You, in turn, should tell them how you feel. Perhaps you can negotiate some compromises that respect both your feelings and those of the children you love. For example, you might agree not to use tobacco at mealtimes, in the car, or on a child's birthday.

If you still wonder whether you should talk with children about tobacco, remember that they learn from you even when you're not deliberately teaching. You send messages not only by smoking or chewing, but also by what you do and don't discuss with them. Talking about tobacco will help them understand and interpret your behavior.

How to Use This Book

The first two chapters provide important background information and some general principles for talking about tobacco with children up to the age of ten. Chapter one briefly reviews what we know about how children learn to use tobacco to establish a framework for prevention. Chapter two highlights ways in which talking with children can help prevent them from becoming users. This chapter also considers how children's development will affect what you say to them about tobacco.

Each of the following five chapters focuses on one topic about tobacco and presents suggestions for talking about that topic in detail with children. Chapter 3 uses children's natural aversion to tobacco to describe what the substance is, and to point out an important prevention concept—that most people don't like tobacco smoking and chewing, and they don't like to be around it.

Chapter 4 encourages children to trust their senses about smoke in their environment, and teaches them some ways to be assertive about their rights not to be around tobacco if they don't like it. This chapter also makes children aware of smoking restrictions in the community.

Chapter 5 focuses on why anyone would use tobacco. This chapter presents simplified explanations of what a drug is, and what it means to be addicted to a drug.

The material in Chapter 6 helps you talk in terms children can understand about what using tobacco can do to the body, and how using it can limit choices about friends, money, and where you can sit in restaurants!

Finally, Chapter 7 introduces children to some simple advertising techniques. Discussion shows how these techniques are used in tobacco advertising, and some ways to keep from being fooled by the ads.

Your talk will probably not proceed in this sequence. Children often leap from question to question, as your reply to one question stimulates another. This is a sign of active minds at work, so follow children's lead even if this means that you hop from topic to topic and then back again.

Chapter titles and headings will help you locate material relevant to particular issues children raise, but just a bit of it may be all that is appropriate for a single conversation. Expect to revisit each topic many times. Each time you do, you can add something new to your talk.

Each topic chapter is introduced by a title that reflects an observation or a question often voiced by children, followed by a brief overview of chapter content. Content is presented under the following headings.

Goals of communication. This section identifies relevant goals for communicating with children on the tobacco topic. Some goals are specific to tobacco education. Others are more general developmental goals that can be advanced through talk about tobacco. Not all of these goals can be achieved in a single conversation, but having them in mind can help you guide discussion as it develops.

Starting the talk. This section identifies circumstances that may prompt children to initiate conversation about the topic. It also provides suggestions to help you start the talk.

What to say. In this section, the topic is discussed in language that you might use in talking with children. Care has been taken to assure that the information about tobacco provided in these sections is scientifically accurate. An effort also has been made to provide developmentally appropriate explanations, but you should make further adjustments to accommodate the developmental readiness of your young partners in communication.

What's missing, of course, are the comments and questions that children, as unique personalities, will introduce into the conversations. So you should not deliver this content in one long, uninterrupted narrative. A better approach is to read these chapters as background for spontaneous and interactive talk.

Activities. As children talk with you, involving them in simple activities and games will help reinforce critical ideas and open the door for ongoing communication. Each chapter suggests a few such activities, with wording that could be used to present them directly to children.

Some of these suggestions identify ways to continue interacting conversationally with children. Others involve them in problem-solving, small projects, or other types of experiential learning. A number of activities help develop skills in observation, self-expression, and even arithmetic.

Most activities can be used with children in grades 1-3, but they may be too advanced for pre-school youngsters and those in kindergarten. Again, use your judgment in selecting activities appropriate for your children.

Additional resources for enriching and complementing your conversations about tobacco with young children can be found in the Resources section at the end of this book.

Special issues. Talking to children about tobacco may raise special issues that affect your conversations about the topic subject. This section discusses some of those issues.

Concepts relevant to the topic may be hard for young children to understand. You may smoke or chew tobacco yourself. Children may live with people who use tobacco. Children themselves may have tried smoking or chewing. Perhaps a child's relative, neighbor, or close friend has a tobacco-related disease or has died from one. Your talk will need to be adapted to be sensitive to any of these issues.

Since these situations involve specific people, appropriate communication will vary depending on your relationship with the children, their needs, and the resources available. What you say and how you say it will also depend on whether you are talking with a child individually or conducting a group discussion.

Whatever the circumstances, good communication involves sensitivity to the concerns and feelings of others. This is the most important principle to keep in mind when special issues come up in your talk. Even when you don't know what to say, showing children that you care about them is an invaluable message.

Messages to reinforce. Chapters 3 through 7 each conclude with a summary of key messages important in tobacco use prevention. You may want to choose one or more of these points as the focus for creating your own activities to reinforce your conversations. You also can refer to the summary for a quick reminder of main ideas to emphasize when you talk about the topic at different times and in different contexts.

Secret Ingredients

While this book suggests effective ways to talk with young children about tobacco, your knowledge of the children involved, the time available for discussion on a particular occasion, and the situation in which talk takes place will affect the course of each conversation.

Your personality and communication style and those of your children also add special flavor to every discussion. These qualities are "secret ingredients" in relationships between adults and children. They need to be combined with the information in this book to create your own particular recipes for success.

Talking about tobacco will provide opportunities for both children and adults to share observations, ideas, and discoveries, as well as questions and concerns. Participants should also be able to express their feelings about the matters under discussion.

Since tobacco is interwoven into almost every aspect of American life, it can evoke a broad range of human reactions. Depending on the circumstances, these might involve disgust, pleasure, bewilderment, distress, anger, delight, curiosity, amazement, and very often, amusement.

Talking about tobacco can open many avenues for children and adults to know each other better. This book is intended to help you explore these pathways with children in ways that will strengthen the quality of your relationship. Enjoy the experience!

Chapter 1

Learning to Use Tobacco

Children learn to use tobacco as part of all the learning they do while they are growing up. Very little of this learning results from deliberate teaching. Most of it happens gradually as children observe their social environment and construct explanations that help them understand it and function in it. This means that efforts to prevent children from smoking and chewing should begin early and continue throughout the developmental years.

To help you understand how talk about tobacco can contribute to prevention, this chapter reviews what we know about the initiation of tobacco use. It begins by examining four stages through which children learn to use tobacco. Next, conditions that place children at special risk of becoming smokers and chewers are discussed.

Tobacco use is then considered as a sign of children's general developmental progress, and as a signal about potential developmental difficulties. The significance of this signal is underscored in a final section that summarizes the relationship of smoking and chewing to the development of other risky behaviors.

Stages of Learning

Every day of the year about 3,000 persons in the United States begin to smoke, and most of them are under 21 years of age. Late childhood and early adolescence are peak times of smoking onset, but readiness to smoke begins much earlier.

Experts now think the adoption of smoking occurs in several distinct stages. Until recently few children used chewing tobacco and snuff, so much less is known about smokeless tobacco use. However, similar processes are thought to be involved in learning how to use both cigarettes and "chew."

Preparation. Most children under age ten are in the first stage of smoking initiation—preparation. During this stage, intentions to smoke are developed, but children haven't yet actually tried a cigarette. Prevention during this stage may be most effective.

Infants are conscious of cigarette smoke as early as four months of age, and by the time they are three years old, over 90 percent of children recognize the odor. Interviews with young children have shown that the smell of tobacco smoke may be among their earliest memories.

Through early learning from their environment, children develop attitudes about smoking, images of what smoking is like, and a sense of why people do it. Those who come to view tobacco use as a pleasurable and socially acceptable adult behavior develop intentions to use tobacco themselves in future years. Cigarette smoke may evoke agreeable thoughts in children who associate the smell with favorite people.

In addition, as children observe smokers, they begin to anticipate the personal experience of smoking. They often imitate smokers by using a straw, a pencil, or other cylinder as a practice cigarette. On cold days when they can see their breath in the air, they may pretend they're smoking and even try blowing smoke rings. Children who are allowed to handle cigarettes, lighters, matches, and ashtrays may imitate smoking with these materials.

Initiation. During the initiation stage, children try their first cigarette. About two-thirds of all children will have smoked at least once by the time they are high school seniors. Although this percentage is still very high, it reflects a decline from the mid-1970s when about three-fourths of high school seniors reported they had ever smoked.

This good news is offset by some bad news. The average age at which children try their first cigarette appears to be dropping. Two recent surveys of high school youth show that about one-fourth of those who had ever smoked tried their first cigarette by grade six.

Children often first use tobacco with a friend. Adults may not know when this has happened. A recent survey of children attending grades 3 through 12 in 199 American public schools showed that while 41 percent of the students reported that they had smoked a cigarette, only 14 percent of their parents thought their child had smoked (Louis Harris and Associates, 1988).

Children try tobacco for many different reasons. Some are simply curious. Others seek social acceptance or want to overcome a poor self-image by appearing to be tough, cool, and independent. Regardless of their underlying motives, children with ready access to cigarettes, snuff, and chew find trying these products much easier.

Experimentation. When children enter the experimental stage, they smoke cigarettes more frequently. They learn how to handle cigarettes and how tobacco affects them under different conditions.

Although children at this stage are not strongly addicted to nicotine, they begin to inhale and this starts the addictive process. The major reasons for smoking are still probably social and psychological, but physiologic factors begin to become more important. Children at this stage are able to quit smoking with little difficulty. Many do.

Very few young children smoke experimentally, but by the fifth grade, from two to five percent of children report smoking monthly or more often. The proportion of children who experiment with tobacco increases sharply in junior high or middle school. Further increases occur at each grade level.

Maintenance. The fourth and final stage of becoming a smoker involves regular use of cigarettes. Although children under age ten are unlikely to have reached this stage, those who first try smoking in early childhood are at high risk of becoming confirmed smokers in later years.

Adolescents and adults who began smoking at a young age, compared to those who started when they were older, also find that quitting is more difficult. For this reason, persons who start smoking as children typically use cigarettes over an extended period of many years, greatly increasing their chances of developing a chronic disease and dying prematurely.

What Makes Children Smoke?

Many of the forces that affect children's overall development also affect the likelihood that they will start to smoke or chew tobacco. As summarized by John Clausen (1986), these can be grouped into four broad categories:

1. children's special characteristics (including biological make-up, personality, temperament, intelligence and appearance);
2. their sources of socialization, support, and guidance;
3. opportunities or obstacles in their environment as these are influenced by social class, ethnic group, age, sex, and the nature of the times; and
4. the investments that children and others make in their behalf.

Exactly how these forces influence either development in general or the initiation of tobacco use in particular is not well understood. However, a number of research studies have identified characteristics of children who begin using tobacco early. Not all youngsters who fit these descriptions become tobacco users. But children with combinations of the following variables may be more likely to use tobacco.

Family members use tobacco. Parents who smoke or chew teach their children by example that tobacco use is acceptable. As they smoke or chew, parents provide direct and repeated demonstrations of the specific behaviors involved in use.

Older brothers and sisters who smoke or chew also provide powerful role models for children. These circumstances, combined with the ready availability of tobacco in the home and children's natural curiosity, promote experimentation.

Adolescents who began smoking or chewing early often report that a family member introduced them to tobacco. "While we were out in the boat fishing, dad took the cigarette out of his mouth and offered me a puff." ... "My sister gave me a cigarette for my birthday and told me that now I was old enough to smoke."..."When I was five, my parents bought me a cowboy outfit and my uncle gave me some chew to go with it."

Friends use tobacco. Children are as likely to imitate the behavior of another child as that of an adult. They also learn by observing older and admired peers. The chances that children will use tobacco therefore increase when members of their peer group use it.

Although "peer pressure" is widely considered to be the major reason why youngsters start to use tobacco and other substances, this is probably an over-simplification. Peer pressure can take many forms.

Some children may urge others to smoke or chew and taunt them if they don't, but this type of peer influence is relatively uncommon. More often, children offer tobacco to others in friendship. Not surprisingly, children who smoke and chew tend to have friends who use tobacco, while non-users typically are pals with other non-users.

Very little is known about the role of tobacco use in the formation of peer groups. A common assumption is that children try tobacco in order to gain acceptance by the peer group, or that once in, they begin smoking to stay in the group. But some peer groups don't welcome tobacco users and some children voluntarily leave a group when members begin smoking.

An alternative view is that children who are interested in trying tobacco gravitate toward other children who are already using it. This, too, may be overly simplistic. Studies that have attempted to trace the dynamics of peer group influence on children's tobacco use reveal a complex web of relationships.

The important point is that peer influence on tobacco use cannot readily be understood apart from the broader context of children's developing social relationships. Of course, if "everybody's doing it," then children can be socialized into tobacco use as a part of a generalized youth or community culture.

Tobacco condoned by society. In the United States, the use of tobacco is so prevalent and its promotion so pervasive that even children who are not exposed to smoking and chewing in their homes or friendship groups will see this behavior attractively modeled in the community and through the mass media.

Although such modeling is becoming less common as national smoking rates decline, the tobacco industry uses extremely sophisticated marketing techniques in an effort to counter the non-smoking trend. Tobacco is widely advertised in both direct and subtle ways. New products are introduced with splashy campaigns and sample distributions. Tobacco is attractively packaged, readily available, and prominently displayed in a variety of sales locations.

You may think children aren't aware of these influences, but social scientists paint a very different picture. Ruth Benedict (1934), an anthropologist, observed that "From the moment of birth the customs into which a child is born affect his experience and his behavior."

Robert Coles (1986), a child psychiatrist, has found that "a nation's continuing life becomes enmeshed in the personal lives of its children." The widespread promotion and use of tobacco in the United States, therefore, inevitably influences children's social learning and socialization.

Because the availability of tobacco and the social norms governing its use are not the same in different households, neighborhoods, schools, and communities, children growing up in different social environments learn different lessons about tobacco.

When families don't permit smoking and chewing in the home, policies prohibit tobacco use on school grounds, communities restrict smoking in public places, and laws against selling tobacco to minors are enforced, tobacco's social importance is diminished.

On the other hand, when smoking and chewing are integrated into patterns of everyday life, children accept these behaviors as normal and customary. They also learn how tobacco use contributes to human interaction.

For example, they observe that sharing a cigarette or some chew helps to forge a common bond between tobacco users. They see that lighting another person's cigarette symbolizes friendship and consideration. They notice that someone who doesn't know exactly what to say can buy time by puffing on a cigarette or filling the mouth with chewing tobacco.

Weak attachments to community. Children are at lower risk when they identify closely with families, friends, schools, churches, and other groups that neither use tobacco nor endorse its use by others. Conversely, children within the same community who associate with groups and institutions where smoking and chewing are common and well tolerated are very likely to use tobacco themselves.

Children with little attachment to their family, community, and the community's institutions appear to be at very high risk for tobacco use. Such alienation may be associated with rebelliousness and other personality traits demonstrated by early anti-social behavior. It may result from family conflict and conditions of social and economic deprivation.

Recent findings that latchkey children are at high risk for cigarette smoking suggest that insufficient adult attention and supervision also may play a role.

Regardless of the causes, children who lack close identification with family, school, and community are particularly susceptible to the influence of peers who experiment with a wide range of behaviors, who believe that "kids should be able to do whatever they want," and who give little thought to the potential consequences of their actions.

Authoritarian parenting style. The way parents relate to their children affects many aspects of their development, including their patterns of substance use. This is a complicated area and much remains to be learned. However, research suggests that parents who set arbitrary rules, insist on unquestioning obedience, and impose excessively severe discipline tend to produce anxious, less socially responsible children. Such a parenting style appears to increase the risk that children will become regular users of tobacco and other substances.

Children of parents who are lax or inconsistent in discipline also appear more likely to become users of tobacco and other drugs. These children tend to be less independent than others and more immature in their behaviors.

The best protection against substance use appears to come from parents who set behavioral standards and help children adhere to them through consistent and loving guidance. By encouraging children's individuality, self-expression, initiative, and questioning attitudes, and by tolerating a certain amount of aggressiveness, these parents foster children's competence and independence. These children may experiment with tobacco, but they are less likely than other children to become long-term users.

Low school achievement. Children who earn low grades and have little involvement in school activities are more likely to start smoking at a young age than high academic achievers. One way of explaining this consistent research finding is that children who don't do well in school don't identify with school values and norms that discourage smoking and chewing. Another explanation is that youngsters who aren't doing well in school, either academically or socially, compensate by "being first" in substance use.

Different rate of development. Children whose developmental course is different from that of most peer group members may be at special risk of smoking. Boys who are small and slow to develop physically may smoke to establish their toughness and independence. Girls who develop physically and socially faster than their classmates may smoke to set themselves apart from their same-age peers and to signal their maturity to older boys and girls.

Limited problem-solving and coping skills. Some evidence indicates that young children who use tobacco are less able than their non-smoking peers to cope with and resolve the problems of daily living. Children who act first and think later, who can identify few alternatives for action, and who consider only the very immediate consequences of their behavior all appear more likely to smoke and chew.

Low self-esteem. Children with low self-esteem and a poor self-image are more likely to begin smoking than children who are self-confident. Again, tobacco use may be a way to compensate.

The Developmental Path

Tobacco use by young children is not only a result of influences that affect their development. It is also a reflection of the course their development is following. Youngsters who try smoking or chewing once or twice may simply be demonstrating natural curiosity. But they are also signaling that they identify, at least to some extent, with people who use tobacco.

Children who experiment with tobacco more frequently and those who begin to use it regularly send out signals too. Youngsters who smoke and chew are trying to define their individuality and their autonomy. They are striving to increase the sphere of behaviors in which they are competent. They are seeking to establish their place in the family and the peer group and to win greater social acceptance. They also may want to show that they feel older than they are being treated.

Children's tobacco use thus can be viewed as an attempt to meet basic developmental needs. Young smokers and chewers are trying to assume adult social roles, with accompanying rights and privileges. As Clausen (1986) has pointed out, "The boy or girl who takes on adult patterns of smoking . . . will be seen as 'fast' in more than one sense."

The problem, of course, is that tobacco is addictive. Children who begin to smoke or chew for social reasons develop psychological and physiologic dependence on tobacco that leads to more frequent, regular, and prolonged use.

Another problem is that tobacco use represents a short-cut to the successful completion of normal development. In his book, *The Hurried Child,* David Elkind (1981) points out that childhood used to be a time when youngsters could develop at their own pace in a protected environment. But children are growing up too fast in today's world.

Changes in family structure, the pace of urban living, pressures for academic achievement, the expansion of the mass media, and direct marketing to children as consumers make childhood a less protected time. Children therefore may take on adult behaviors before they are ready and before they understand the consequences.

Smoking and chewing by children signal that this is happening. Advertising promotes tobacco use as a deceptively quick and easy route to popularity, success, and an attractive self-image. Instead of developing important competencies, children use tobacco to cope with the stresses of growing up and to solve the problems of daily living.

Children who take this shortcut miss opportunities to master age-appropriate developmental tasks. These children are cheated of the chance to gain the self-knowledge and self-respect earned only through genuine accomplishment.

Other Risky Behaviors

When children's tobacco use is viewed in a developmental context, it's not surprising that youngsters who smoke cigarettes are at increased risk for initiating other behaviors that threaten their health and well-being.

Since the use of smokeless tobacco by children is a newer phenomenon, less is known about the relationship of this form of tobacco use to other risky behaviors. However, among boys, chewing and dipping appear to be related to other forms of risk-taking in much the same way as smoking. Also, boys who chew are more likely than non-chewers to have tried smoking, and boys who smoke cigarettes are more likely than nonsmokers to try chewing.

Much research shows that children who smoke are more likely than nonsmokers to use alcohol at an early age. Using tobacco and alcohol typically precedes use of marijuana and then experimentation with other illicit drugs.

For this reason, tobacco and alcohol use is widely recognized as the "gateway" to the use and abuse of other substances. Teenagers who smoke cigarettes are 10 times more likely than nonsmokers to use marijuana and 14 times more likely to use heroin and cocaine.

It is important to note that not all children who smoke or drink will use other types of substances. The point is simply that youngsters who use tobacco and alcohol are significantly more likely than non-users to use illicit drugs.

Children who smoke are also more likely than nonsmokers to engage in other high risk behaviors that interfere with their learning and development. These children tend to eat and sleep irregularly. Teenage girls who smoke and drink are likely to begin intercourse at an earlier age than girls who don't use tobacco and alcohol. Youth who smoke and use other substances also are more likely than nonusers to engage in truancy, aggression, reckless driving, and shoplifting.

These behaviors, in turn, increase children's risk for a host of health and social problems, including illiteracy, school dropout, running away from home, teenage pregnancy, AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, prostitution, delinquency, criminal acts, and welfare dependence.

Children who engage in high risk behaviors also have increased chances of dying at an early age from injury, suicide, or other violence. Those who survive adolescence are at increased risk for chronic physical and mental disease during adulthood.

Knowledge is still limited about how these multiple high risk behaviors develop. Some researchers have proposed that all forms of high risk behavior in childhood and adolescence are driven by common developmental factors. Others point out that while this may be true in a general sense, smoking, chewing, alcohol use, and other specific behaviors are each associated with different social norms and different customs. Influences on the development of each of these behaviors therefore may be unique.

These two viewpoints have different implications for prevention. If all risk-taking behaviors can be traced to common developmental problems, then an approach that is effective in preventing one risky behavior will be effective in preventing others. If each high risk behavior is influenced by unique forces, then specific approaches must be developed to prevent each behavior.

Theory and research provide some support for each of these positions. This book assumes that both contain some truth. Accordingly it recommends that in talking with children about tobacco, teachers, parents, and other adults should aim to foster overall learning and development, while also using specific knowledge about tobacco use to prevent children from smoking and chewing.

Chapter 2

Talking Them Out of Starting

TOBACCO
ROAD

Now that we understand more about how children learn to smoke and chew, we can be more specific about ways to prevent these behaviors by talking with them about tobacco. That is the focus of this chapter.

What we know about why children start using tobacco implies four complementary strategies for prevention. The chapter begins with an overview of these four strategies, and considers their implications for talking with young children. Practical pointers for effective communication are provided along the way.

Four Prevention Strategies

Four general approaches for preventing tobacco use can be applied with children up to age ten:

- Try to provide them with a tobacco-free environment.
- Give them clear, consistent messages.
- Help them recognize and think about confusing messages.
- Foster their overall healthy growth and development.

Each of these strategies is important, and each can contribute to the prevention of smoking and chewing. However, these strategies are complementary. Prevention will be most effective when all four strategies are implemented together.

A variety of methods are important in implementing these strategies. Formal tobacco education curricula, laws prohibiting tobacco sales to minors, smoking cessation programs for adults, and ordinances restricting tobacco use in public places all play critical roles.

The extent to which these preventive measures are going on in the community where you live will affect what you say and how you talk about tobacco with children. Such activities also may influence the messages that children hear and see concerning tobacco use.

However, our central concern is helping you prevent tobacco use through interactive communication with children. Following are specific suggestions to help you implement the four strategies for prevention, with special emphasis on what you can accomplish through talk.

A Tobacco-Free Environment

Actions speak louder than words when it comes to tobacco use prevention. Attempting to establish a tobacco free environment sets the stage for talking about tobacco with children. Your efforts are an important part of their prevention education.

Limit their exposure to tobacco use by others. Adults who care for young children can help keep them tobacco free by neither smoking nor chewing themselves and by restricting children's exposure to tobacco use by others.

If you don't use tobacco, asking others not to smoke or chew in your presence can provide a positive role model for children. This makes it clear that you find tobacco use unpleasant and socially unacceptable. Such actions send important messages to children who watch and listen.

Adults who use tobacco can contribute to prevention by refraining from smoking or chewing in children's presence, and by showing consideration for others who are bothered by tobacco use. For example, an adult who wishes to smoke might move away from nonsmokers or step outdoors. After finishing a cigarette, a smoker might clean the ashtray and dispose of the ashes safely.

Parents might inquire whether there are smokers or chewers in the families of friends that their children visit. If so, ask the parents of these friends to help in limiting children's exposure to tobacco use.

Don't ask them to help others smoke or chew. Don't ask children to fetch cigarettes, matches, ashtrays, smokeless tobacco, or other materials involved in tobacco use. Ask other adults to refrain from such requests, as well.

Restrict their access to tobacco. Cigarettes and smokeless tobacco should not be left on table tops or elsewhere around the house.

Find out from the local police if your state or community prohibits the sale of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco to minors under a specified age. Most states have such a law, but specific provisions vary. If a local store is selling tobacco to minors in violation of the law, report the violation to the police and ask them to enforce the law.

Know which stores and other establishments your children visit. Restrict children's access to locations that sell tobacco to children and that have cigarette vending machines.

If these objectives seem difficult or impossible to achieve, remember that they represent *ideals.* In some cases, your own behavior will fall short. In other cases, outside influences that promote children's tobacco use will be beyond your control. Establishing optimal conditions for preventing tobacco use is likely to require organized community effort.

Check from time to time to see how you measure up to these standards. This will enable you to assess the social environment within which you will be talking with children about tobacco. Your conversations should take this climate into account. Indeed, this is something that you and the children in your life should discuss.

Give Clear, Consistent Messages

Emphasize the following messages when you talk with children:

- People shouldn't use tobacco.
- Most children, teenagers and grownups don't use tobacco.
- Most people don't like being around someone who is smoking or chewing tobacco.
- Most people who use tobacco would like to quit.

- Nicotine is addictive. People who use tobacco have a hard time quitting.
- Using tobacco hurts your body.
- Companies that sell tobacco try to fool you into using it.
- Many people in the community are working to limit tobacco use.

As you talk about tobacco with children, try to convey these messages clearly. Look for ways to repeat and reinforce them. The following chapters will suggest ways to weave these central themes into conversations about particular tobacco topics.

Sorting Out Conflicting Messages

Children receive many verbal and non-verbal messages about tobacco in the social environment. Helping them identify and interpret these messages is one of the most important contributions you can make toward helping them not use tobacco.

In most communities, messages promoting tobacco far outnumber messages aimed at prevention. The tobacco industry spends almost 3.2 billion dollars annually to encourage the consumption of cigarettes. Cigarettes are one of the most heavily promoted consumer products in the United States. Ads are so widespread and placed with such sophistication that they have become a normal part of everyday life.

Many messages promoting tobacco use are subtle. For example, a study of 133 films reviewed between July 1987 and June 1988 showed that cigarette smoking appeared in 87 percent of those rated PG and in 100 percent of those rated PG-13.

Smoking is also attractively modeled on television and cigarette advertisements even appear in children's video games. And, as already pointed out, use of tobacco by people whom children see and know in their everyday lives also sends powerful messages that undermine efforts at prevention.

Helping children make sense out of conflicting information about tobacco is an important part of the prevention picture. The following tips can help in talking about these messages.

Encourage children to share and discuss their observations. As a special version of "I spy," this ongoing activity can be fun, especially when children observe tobacco-related messages that you have missed. Children are astute observers, so they are likely to see tobacco promoted and used in many ways that don't catch your attention. They may also hear about tobacco in ways that you don't notice. Telling you what they see and hear about tobacco can help children become conscious monitors of tobacco in their environment.

Take children's questions seriously. Children are curious about the world around them and they are learning rapidly. They often reveal their interests or their curiosity by asking very pointed questions. These questions may be asked much as we talk to ourselves without any expectation of an answer. But adults who listen carefully will delight in the freshness of children's observations. And these observations can lead to some very interesting talk about tobacco.

Be sure you understand what they're asking. You've probably heard the story about the child who asked, "Where did I come from?" After his mother painstakingly described human reproduction, the child commented, "That's very interesting. Joe comes from Poughkeepsie."

Wait for children to finish their question and comments about it before you respond. To make sure you understand the point of the question, paraphrase it. For example, if the child asks, "What does smoking do to you?," you might say, "You'd like to know what happens to a person's body when they smoke. Is that right?" Or you might say, "Tell me a little bit more about what you want to know."

Be honest. If you don't have a good answer for a child's question, say so. Use community resources to gather information and then tell the child what you found out. Or look up the answer together, as a special project.

Be honest about your feelings as well. When children ask questions about a sensitive subject, don't dismiss them or hedge in your reply. Let them know the subject is difficult for you to discuss. If you can, tell them why.

For example, if a child asks his mother why his father keeps smoking even after the doctor says to quit, she might say, "I don't really know. I wish he would quit because I'm worried. Are you worried, too? I think we should both talk it over with him and tell him how we feel."

As children share their observations and questions with you, you will learn not only what they see and hear about tobacco in their social environment, but also what they think about it. This can help you focus on relevant issues for talking.

Use children's comments about the prevention efforts of others as a special opportunity to reinforce their work. For example, after a dental check-up, a child might report that "The dentist told me never to use chewing tobacco because it makes sores in your mouth." You can then say, "That's important advice. I'm happy your dentist is telling her patients not to chew tobacco."

As children recognize conflicts in the messages they encounter, they may become interested in the relationships between the people and groups who promote tobacco use and those that discourage it. Use these opportunities to help children learn more about the social world. As Coles (1986) has shown, even young children are aware of political issues and they work hard to understand them. Their comments can be surprisingly perceptive, outspoken, blunt, and imaginative.

Helping Children Grow and Develop

Readiness to use tobacco evolves in conjunction with other, broader processes of child development. So assisting and supporting children as they undertake various developmental tasks lays the foundation for preventing smoking, chewing, and other risky behaviors. Talking about tobacco should occur in this developmental context.

Interactive communication that encourages children to express themselves and engage in meaningful dialogue with adults helps them develop their sense of identity and feelings of self-worth. This also helps them to find healthy outlets for their natural curiosity.

Talking about tobacco can build children's skills in communication, critical-thinking, and problem-solving. It can help them develop a sense of humor. Open, two-way communication can strengthen a child's relationship with you. Progress in all these areas helps develop competent, confident children who are increasingly able to take care of themselves in the world.

Talking about tobacco in ways that contribute to healthy development requires that both children and adults share in deciding the content of communication. It also requires continuing attention to the quality of the communication process.

Practical pointers throughout this chapter can help you meet both of these conditions. Those below highlight additional ways your conversations can help teach children how to handle situations that might tempt them to smoke or chew.

Help children develop their own viewpoints. Encourage children to express their thoughts and feelings by asking for their opinions. Respect what they say and explore the meaning of their comments with them.

When the time is right, let children know what you think and give them your reasons. Be sure they have a chance to explain what they think too. Remember that children's beliefs and attitudes are formed gradually. If you can keep the dialog going, you will have an influence.

If your opinions differ, show children good ways to handle differing points of view. Don't close off communication by telling children they are wrong. Suggest that you each explain why you feel the way you do. Cushion statements of your own views by beginning with phrases like, "I think...," "It seems to me...," or "Here's how I look at it...." Then ask children to tell you what they think.

If you feel strongly about tobacco use, either pro or con, be particularly careful that your communication with children is not aimed at simply having them adopt your point of view. This can be counterproductive. Children need to learn how to think for themselves. Your job is to help them do this.

Help them solve problems. When children tell you about a problem, express sympathy for their dilemma. You might say, "That's a tough situation" or "I can see why you're worried."

Ask what bothers them most about the problem. Help them think of different ways they could handle the situation. Join them in thoughtfully discussing the potential consequences of each option. Help them develop criteria for choosing the alternative that they think is best. Then ask them to pick their preferred solution and to tell you why they chose it. Try out the solution with them, perhaps by role-playing.

Work with children to modify and refine their approach to handling situations they find difficult. Help them understand how other people involved in the situation may think and feel. Discuss expectations that others may have for children's behavior, and how they feel about those expectations. Help them adapt to circumstances that require responses that are different from those they know and prefer.

When children try out a solution in real life, ask them how it went. If the outcome was satisfactory, share their triumph. If it was not effective, speculate with them about the reasons why and then help them think of an alternative strategy. Regardless of the results, praise them for working so hard on solving the problem.

Provide positive reinforcement. Show children that you enjoy talking with them by taking time to listen. Show that you appreciate their comments and observations. You might say, "That's a good way of putting it."..."I never thought about it that way before." Acknowledge "good" questions, including tough ones. Tell others in children's hearing about something wise they said. Praise their special qualities. Young children respond well to positive recognition.

Help them develop a sense of humor. Look for humor in situations that you discuss. Laugh at yourself and help children learn how to laugh at themselves too. Enjoy the wit in children's observations. Above all, encourage children to laugh at the efforts of tobacco advertising to make smoking and chewing look like fun.

Readiness for Learning

Talking about tobacco with young children will be most successful if you take their readiness for learning into account. This involves considering both their level of interest at the moment and their developmental capacity for understanding.

Children don't think like adults, and the way they think changes as they grow. Since youngsters under the age of ten tend to think very concretely, many concepts commonly used in discussing the health consequences of tobacco use will be difficult or impossible for them to understand. These problems are discussed as special issues in later chapters.

The following practical pointers will help you adapt your talk about tobacco to children's readiness for learning.

Talk so they can understand you. The sample conversations in this book attempt to provide information about tobacco use and to answer children's questions on this subject in language that children under age ten can understand. However, even this material may be too advanced for preschool children. Try talking about tobacco in small doses and monitor children's reactions so you will know how to adjust your conversation.

Use concrete, practical terms. Instead of saying "smoking can hurt your health," point out that "people who smoke sometimes have trouble breathing." Instead of discussing the long-term health consequences of tobacco use, emphasize short-term effects.

Monitor their interest. A child's comment or question about tobacco indicates a readiness to talk about it. This doesn't necessarily mean the child is ready for long conversation. A brief exchange may be all the child wants or can absorb at that moment.

Gauge the level of children's interest as discussion proceeds, and stop or change the subject when their attention wanes. A series of short conversations in which children are highly involved will be more effective than a single long one during which they lose interest.

On the other hand, when children want to keep talking, by all means keep the conversation going. If time for discussion is limited, agree on a later time when you can continue your talk.

Use direct experience. While children are panting for breath after running, point out that "smoking often makes people struggle for breath like this all the time." When it's appropriate to do so, call their attention to how unpleasant it is to be around cigarette smoke. Make them aware of cigarette butts in the environment—on the ground, in public ashtrays, and sometimes even in dinner plates!

Children and Rules

Children's sense of right and wrong develops as they grow older. Their stage of moral development affects how they relate to rules in their thinking and decision-making.

Children under the age of ten usually conform to adult expectations when rules are clearly and consistently stated. However, children of different ages obey for different reasons. Some scholars think children under age six follow rules simply to obtain approval and avoid punishment. Others believe very young children obey rules because these reflect expectations for children's behavior in the social group.

During the early grades, children come to understand that rules help social groups function smoothly. They also learn that different people have different rules. At this stage, children obey because they accept the authority of people who set rules.

Tell them not to use tobacco. This is the time to tell children not to smoke cigarettes. Tell them not to use snuff, chewing tobacco or other tobacco products. Be firm, clear and consistent in stating your expectation that children won't smoke or chew.

Young children may readily agree with parents, teachers, and other adults who say they shouldn't use tobacco. When children are told not to smoke or chew, they may easily promise they never will. At this point, you may assume your job in tobacco use prevention has been successfully completed. This is a false assumption.

Prevention is more than just rules. Learning about rules continues through older childhood and adolescence. In later stages of development, young people struggle to define for themselves the principles and rules that they will live by as adults. As part of this process, they reject rules they previously accepted, along with the authority of adults who told them what was right and wrong when they were younger.

During this period, the rules youth obey may change with the situation or the social group. Preadolescents may conclude, for example, that it's okay to smoke cigarettes when they're with friends, but not when they're in sight of parents. Promises made during childhood become irrelevant.

To prevent children from using tobacco, you will need to do more than lay down rules and extract pledges. Rules may be effective in keeping young children from smoking and chewing, but their power will diminish once youngsters begin to question authority.

You can build a more durable foundation for prevention by helping children develop their own intrinsic reasons for not smoking and chewing. These may be based on personal aversion to tobacco use. They may be rooted in knowledge about the effects of smoking and chewing on the body. They might relate to a desire to pursue goals or affiliations that are incompatible with using tobacco.

Whatever they may be, reasons for not using tobacco that children identify for themselves will have a greater long-term effect on their behavior than warnings and rules supplied by adults. Warnings and rules can contribute to prevention, but talk about tobacco should go further.

The Home, School and Community

Teachers, parents, and other adults who care for children can work individually in carrying out strategies for prevention. However, since numerous influences in the social environment promote children's tobacco use, prevention will be most effective when adults in the home, the school, and the community work together.

Efforts can be coordinated at many levels. Some communities have organized coalitions to plan and conduct comprehensive programs of tobacco control. Some schools involve teachers, parents, students, staff, and administrators in developing a coordinated approach to tobacco use prevention.

Parents and other family members may collaborate in developing a common plan for tobacco use prevention in the home and the family. Prevention efforts may be coordinated in friendship groups and the neighborhood too.

Whether you are part of such an organized group or not, by working individually to implement these strategies with the children in your life, you will contribute to the total tobacco prevention effort that is now gaining momentum throughout the United States.

You may find informal opportunities to discuss your prevention work with other adults in your children's lives. Prevention is a long-term job and it requires sustained commitment. Adults need to support each other in this work by sharing information, experience, and encouragement, as well as the rewards of helping children to grow up tobacco free.

Chapter 3

Tobacco *Is* Yucky Stuff

This chapter confirms what children already know about tobacco through their senses. Children's natural aversion to tobacco is reinforced by talking about tobacco products, the poisons in tobacco and the unpleasant effects smoking and chewing have on the environment. Children also learn that most people don't like to be around tobacco smoking and chewing.

Goals of Communication

Use the material in this chapter to help children:

- Pay attention to their senses, especially smell and sight.
- Observe, describe and talk about what their senses tell them.
- Satisfy their curiosity about tobacco.
- Strengthen their natural aversion to tobacco.
- Discover that many people find tobacco use unpleasant.

Starting the Talk

Children often respond negatively to the smells and sights associated with using tobacco. These reactions, both verbal and non-verbal, can provide the spark for a spontaneous conversation about tobacco. Beginning around age four or five, children also may ask directly what tobacco is and where it comes from.

You can initiate talk about tobacco by responding to children's comments and questions, by verbalizing your own reactions to tobacco use, or by discussing tobacco when teaching about the senses.

What to Say

Tobacco *is* yucky stuff!

How do we know that? Our nose and our eyes tell us.

What does your nose tell you about tobacco? Children have noses that work very well. You can learn a lot about things by smelling them. Have you ever smelled cigarette smoke? Where did you smell it? How did it smell to you?

Cigarette smoke has a very strong smell. Almost no one likes it when they first smell it. Many people dislike cigarette smoke no matter how many times they smell it. But some people who are around smoke a lot get used to it. This is because using tobacco makes people lose their good sense of smell.

Smokers' noses don't work as well as yours. They sometimes have trouble smelling flowers, cookies baking, and other good things. They can still smell cigarette smoke, but they might not think it is very strong. Sometimes they forget that other people don't like it.

Tobacco has many different kinds of smells. That's because there are many different kinds of tobacco. Tobacco in cigarettes smells different from pipe tobacco. Tobacco in a cigar smells different from tobacco in a can or pouch. Tobacco companies often add perfumes to make cigarettes and other kinds of tobacco smell better. For this reason, even tobacco in the same kind of packages might not smell the same.

Many people don't like the smell of tobacco, even before it's used. But the smell gets worse when tobacco is smoked. Cigarette smoke makes some people choke or cough. It makes some people feel dizzy or sick to their stomach. Have you ever felt this way when you smelled tobacco smoke?

Cigarette ashes and butts smell bad too. Have you ever smelled a dirty ashtray? How does it smell?

Tobacco smoke stays in the air for a long time after the smoker puts out a cigarette. Smoke also stays on the smoker's breath, hair, and clothes. You can usually tell if someone smokes. Even if the person isn't smoking you can smell the old smoke.

Smokers sometimes chew gum or eat breath mints so their breath will smell better. They might brush their teeth a lot. Some smokers use perfume or cologne to cover up the smell of smoke. But these tricks probably can't fool your sensitive nose.

Your nose is a good detective. It can tell you where people have been smoking even if they aren't there any more. Tobacco smoke gets into the upholstery of furniture and cars and stays there. It leaves a smelly, sticky film on windows, walls, and ceilings. When you walk into a smoker's house or ride in a smoker's car, you can almost always tell someone has been smoking there.

Cigarette smoke gets into the hair and clothes of nonsmokers too. If they are around smokers a lot, they will smell like smoke. Do you think this is fair?

What do your eyes tell you about tobacco? Have you seen a pack of cigarettes or a can of chewing tobacco? Are these packages pretty? The companies that sell tobacco make it look pretty so people will buy it. They put it in fancy packages with nice paper and bright colors.

Loose tobacco isn't pretty. When shreds of it get scattered around, it can make a real mess. Some kinds of tobacco come in wrappers to keep it together while it's used. The tobacco in cigarettes is rolled up in thin white paper. Sometimes chewing tobacco comes in little pouches that look like tea bags.

Tobacco is put in packages to make it look neat and tidy. Loose tobacco looks a little bit like old dried weeds. Some chewing tobacco looks like garden dirt and fertilizer mixed together. So the tobacco companies package it in a pretty can.

Tobacco looks even worse when people use it. Cigarette and cigar smokers blow smoke out through their mouths and sometimes their noses, like dragons. Smoking tobacco makes dirty ashes. Smokers who light their cigarettes and cigars with matches add burned up matches to the garbage. Cigarette butts are another part of the mess. If the cigarette butt has a filter on the end, it will be stained yellow-brown. Cigarette butts sometimes have red lipstick smears on them.

You can see all of these things in a dirty ashtray—old gray ashes, burned matches, and bent cigarette butts. This is a disgusting sight. Some smokers don't use an ashtray. Their ashes blow all over the place and drop on the floor or rug. Some smokers throw their cigarette butts on the ground and step on them to put them out. Sometimes smokers throw away their cigarettes and matches while they are still burning. This starts a lot of fires.

Have you seen used cigarette butts on the street or in a park? Where else have you seen them? Nobody thinks cigarette butts make our world more beautiful. They belong in the garbage. People who try to clean up the environment pick up old cigarette butts. This is a very big job.

In California, people who cleaned up the beaches one year decided to count the trash they collected. This was a very dirty job. What do you think they found? They found more cigarette butts than any other kind of trash!

Smokeless tobacco makes a mess too. Chewing tobacco makes your mouth water a lot. This mixes up with the tobacco and makes a yucky brown juice. Chewers either have to swallow this mess or spit it out. Most of them spit, and some of them leave brown stains wherever they go. Some chewers try to be neat. They carry a paper cup around and spit into that. Imagine a paper cup full of brown tobacco spit!

If you look closely at people who use tobacco, you'll see that some of them have brown stains on their teeth. Some smokers also have yellow stains on their fingers where they hold the cigarette. These stains don't wash away.

Tobacco contains many poisons. Why do you think tobacco is so yucky? Tobacco is a plant. It is very pretty when it's growing in the field. Some people even have a tobacco plant in their house because the shiny green leaves look nice. There's no problem with that. The problems start when people smoke or chew tobacco.

Tobacco contains many poisons. Poisons kill living things, or make them sick. Have you heard about poison before? Has anyone ever told you to stay away from a can or bottle in your house because it's a poison? Some liquids and powders that are used to clean the house have poisons in them. The poisons in these cleaners kill germs that make people sick.

If your family has a garden, you might have poison bug killers or insecticides in your basement or garage. These poisons kill bugs that eat plants.

All these poisons can hurt people too. Poisons are very dangerous.

The tobacco plant makes its own poison to protect itself from bugs. This poison is called *nicotine*. Nicotine is a natural insecticide, or bug killer. Nicotine is a very strong poison.

One cigarette doesn't contain enough nicotine to kill people quickly. But every time a person smokes, that person breathes in a little bit of poison. These breaths of poison add up. After a while the nicotine in tobacco starts to hurt the body of the smoker.

Tobacco that is chewed instead of smoked contains nicotine too. There is even more nicotine in some kinds of smokeless tobacco than there is in cigarettes.

Nicotine is so poisonous that the government won't let farmers use it on their crops as a bug killer. Nicotine is too strong and dangerous to use on food crops.

Some farmers spray their tobacco plants with other bug killers. These bug killers are poison too. They can get into the tobacco that people smoke and chew. So, tobacco can have two kinds of bug killers in it—the poison nicotine that's in the tobacco plant and the poison bug killers that farmers spray on the tobacco crops.

Tobacco contains two kinds of smoke. The leaves of the tobacco plant must be dried out to make cigarettes and smokeless tobacco. This is called *curing*. A common way to cure tobacco is to hang the leaves to dry in a shed where low fires are burning. The smoke from these fires gets into the tobacco before it is made into cigarettes.

So a cigarette has two kinds of smoke—the smoke that gets into the leaves while it is being cured and the smoke the cigarette makes when somebody lights it.

After the tobacco dries, the leaves and stems are chopped up. Each tobacco company mixes special flavors and perfumes in with the cut-up tobacco to make its own special kind of tobacco for sale. Chemicals are added to cigarettes to keep them burning when smokers aren't puffing on them.

No one knows exactly what goes into different brands of cigarettes or chewing tobacco because the tobacco companies keep this a secret. Some people worry that the flavors, perfumes, and other chemicals added to tobacco might have poisons in them too.

When a cigarette is smoked, the burning tobacco makes new chemicals. One of these chemicals is a gas called carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide is the same kind of gas that comes out of a car or bus. Carbon monoxide is a poison.

When cigarettes burn, they make thick, dark tar. Tar is a sticky substance, something like the thick black tar that is used to pave roads. Sometimes you can see tar stuck to the bottom of a dirty ashtray.

So if you think tobacco is yucky, you're right. What could be worse than poison leaves, poison gas, and thick black tar all mixed up together? And that's not even all.

Scientists have found more than 4,000 chemicals in cigarette smoke. At least 40 of these chemicals are dangerous poisons. Have you heard about arsenic? Have you heard about cyanide? These are two more of the poisons in cigarette smoke.

Chewing tobacco has dangerous poisons in it too. The most dangerous poison of all is nicotine.

Your nose and your eyes are your friends. Your senses help you learn about the world. They help you protect yourself. When tobacco smells bad to you, your nose is sending you an important message. When cigarette butts and ashes look disgusting to you, your eyes are giving you important information.

Your nose and eyes are saying tobacco is yucky. They are saying tobacco can hurt you. They are saying to stay away from it. Your nose and your eyes want you to be safe. Pay close attention to what they tell you.

Activities

Before doing the first two of these activities at school, be sure to check that having tobacco on school grounds does not violate school policy. Also be sure that you do these activities only with groups small enough for all children to actively participate. If group size keeps some children from satisfying their curiosity about tobacco and having their natural aversion to it reinforced, they may be tempted to find out more about it on their own.

—THE INS AND OUTS OF CIGARETTES—

Use this activity to develop children's abilities to describe an object with multiple characteristics.

"Here is a package of cigarettes. What can you tell me about the package? How does it look? Is the package pretty? Now let's open the package. What do we see inside? How do the cigarettes look before we take any out? How do they look if we take them out of the package? Do they still look pretty? Do they look better inside the package or outside it?

"When I cut a cigarette open, what do you see? How would you describe the tobacco inside a cigarette? Which do you think looks better—the cigarette package or the loose tobacco inside the cigarette?"

Carry this activity further by taking children outside to burn a cigarette. Tell them you are going outside so that they will have lots of nice fresh air to breathe while the cigarette is burning. You can light the cigarette without taking a puff on it yourself by using masking tape to attach it to the nozzle of a squeeze bottle. Several soft squeezes of the bottle may be necessary to light it.

Ask the children to describe what they see and smell while the cigarette is burning. After the cigarette goes out, have children describe the ashes. Cut open the cigarette butt or filter and ask them what they see and smell.

You may also involve children in describing the contents of a dirty ashtray, a can of moist snuff, or other tobacco products.

—TOBACCO IS TOBACCO IS TOBACCO—

Help children identify qualities of objects that are alike and different by comparing different kinds of tobacco.

"Here are several different kinds of tobacco. This is a package of cigarettes. Here's a can of snuff (chew). This is a package of loose leaf tobacco. Here is a can of pipe tobacco. And here is a cigar.

"Do these things look the same? How are they alike? How are they different? Which package do you think is the prettiest? Which one do you think is ugliest?

"Now let's try smelling them. Tobacco smoke contains many poisons, but it will not hurt you to smell tobacco that is not burning. Unburned tobacco cannot hurt you unless you put it in your mouth. How do these different kinds of tobacco smell alike? How do they smell different? Do you smell perfume?

"Let's put some of each kind of tobacco in a little pile so you can look at the piles all together. We have to take the cigarette and the cigar apart to do this. Do these different kinds of tobacco look alike now? How would you describe them? Do the piles of tobacco smell a lot alike, a little bit alike, or not at all alike?

"These tobacco products are all alike in one important way. They all are made of tobacco. That means they all contain nicotine and other poisons."

—SMOKE IS...—

Try this game to help children describe what they see.

"Let's see how many words we can think of to describe tobacco smoke. We'll take turns. Who should go first?"

If you are working with a small group of children, rotate turns. A larger group can be divided into two teams that compete against each other. If you play this game with only one child, simply alternate turns back and forth.

The first time you play, children who have limited vocabularies may be able to provide only one or two words. If the child cannot think of any descriptive words, suggest several from which the child can choose:

"I can see you're thinking. Are you thinking about 'smelly'? Are you thinking about 'dirty'? Maybe you're thinking about 'stale'?"

Have fun with this activity. Exclaim at words that children produce. After a few exchanges, look stumped when it is your turn. Make a face to show you're thinking. After the children have had a chance to laugh, provide a word and continue with the game.

If a child is stumped, allow him or her to give the turn to someone else or simply to pass. Children's vocabularies will expand most rapidly if you play this game repeatedly, but for very short times.

—TOBACCO IS...—

To encourage creativity and imagination, ask children to invent new words that describe tobacco.

"Sometimes it's hard to find a word that says exactly what we're thinking. Let's try making up our own words.

"Let's begin by seeing how many sounds we can make to show that we think something is yucky. Ugh... Ick... ooshy...blaaah... Now try putting some of these sounds together to make some silly words: Ugh-gusting...blaah-goo-ish...spit-icky....What silly words do you think describe tobacco?"

—TOBACCO VOCABULARY—

Build vocabulary by having children collect words that others use to describe tobacco.

"Let's start a collection of words that people use to describe tobacco smoke (or chewing tobacco... or a dirty ashtray... or the smell on smoker's breath and clothes). Today (at recess, at home) ask someone you know to give you a word describing tobacco. You can ask more than one person if you want to.

"Tomorrow we'll see what words you have collected and we'll write them here on the blackboard. Let's try to collect some new and different words every day."

—TOBACCO TALLY—

A variation on the preceding activity can help children learn or practice counting skills. Ask children to collect words that people they know use to describe tobacco smoke. When a word is first reported, write it where the children can see it. Then ask how many others talked to someone who used the same word. Have these children raise their hands. Have the children help you count the number of raised hands, then record the number.

You can do this activity with a single child. Each time the child collects a word from a different person, review the words you've written down. If the new word is already on the list, change the tally. Ask the child to tell you what the new number should be when you add one to the old number.

—TOBACCO TWINS—

Relate other offensive sights and odors in the environment to tobacco smoke. When you are walking with a child and you see a bus approaching on the street, say:

"Let's hold our noses." After the bus passes, say something like, "Don't you hate those fumes? They're full of carbon monoxide, just like cigarette smoke."

When you see a road being paved or a roof being tarred, pause with your child to watch.

"Look at all that thick black tar! I wouldn't like to touch it. It's hot, sticky and gooey. It smells bad. It's hard to believe people would ever put stuff like that into their bodies, but that's just what they do when they smoke cigarettes."

—Counting Trash—

Provide older children with practice in working with numbers from real life.

"As part of a campaign to clean up their beaches, people counted all the trash they collected from beaches in California. Here is what they found:

- 52,031 cigarette butts.
- 20,736 plastic cups and utensils.
- 20,518 glass bottles.
- 13,664 beverage cans.

"What kind of trash did people find most often? How many total items of trash did they find?

"If there are 20 cigarettes in a package of cigarettes, how many packages did it take to make all the butts on the beach?

"If each package of cigarettes cost $2.00, how much did the cigarette butts found on the beach cost?"

—Cigarette Litter Clean-Up—

Conduct your own environmental clean-up. Provide each child with a disposable glove and a paper bag. Take a walk or visit a park, picking up cigarette butts you find on the way. Since some kinds of trash can be hazardous, be sure to emphasize that children should pick up only cigarette butts.

"Let's find out whether our neighborhood is littered with cigarette butts. If we find some, we can help to clean up our environment by picking them up and throwing them into the trash can.

"We don't want to touch the butts with our hands, so let's each put on a glove that we can throw away after we've finished our clean-up work. Remember, we are looking only for cigarette butts. Do not pick up any other kind of trash."

After you return from the walk, dispose of the gloves and the butts collected. Have children wash their hands. Then talk about the experience.

"Did you find a lot of cigarette butts? How did they look? How did they smell? Did the park look cleaner after we picked up the butts?"

Special Issues

Difficult concepts. Saying that tobacco contains many dangerous poisons, including nicotine, may raise questions from children that are difficult to answer in ways they can understand. For example, they might ask, "If tobacco has poisons in it, why are people allowed to touch it? How come smokers are still alive? Why can stores sell poisons?"

Answering the first question involves explaining that different poisons get into the body in different ways. Some poisons are absorbed through the skin. This is not how poison from tobacco gets into the body.

Other poisons are in the air and enter the body as people breathe. This happens when people smoke cigarettes or other kinds of tobacco. It also happens when nonsmokers breathe the smoke from other people's cigarettes.

Some poisons are eaten. Although chewing tobacco and snuff are not strictly eaten, nicotine from smokeless tobacco is absorbed through the tissues of the mouth.

One problem with this type of explanation is that children may conclude that since tobacco is not poisonous to the touch, it's all right for them to handle tobacco products. This should be discouraged because it provides practice for smoking and chewing in the future. If the issue comes up, try to reinforce children's natural aversion to tobacco in ways discussed in this chapter.

Explaining why smokers are still alive involves discussing the dose-response relationship between tobacco use and resulting health consequences. That is, the more tobacco people consume, the worse the effects on the body. However, dose is not easy to explain. In the case of cigarette smoking, dose is affected by the type of cigarette smoked, the number of puffs taken on each cigarette, depth of inhalation, the number of cigarettes smoked in an average day or week, and the number of years that smoking continues. This concept is very complicated for young children.

Attempting to explain dose to children may lead them to conclude that "a few cigarettes won't hurt me." This belief is highly correlated with the initiation of smoking at an early age.

Response to cigarette smoking is not easy to explain either. Effects differ in different people for reasons that are not well understood. Moreover, the effects of tobacco use may not be apparent for many years and they are most often described in terms of disease and death. Most young children have not yet developed the capacity for understanding these concepts. If questions about the effects of tobacco use come up in your conversation, Chapters 5 and 6 can both help identify age-appropriate ways to deal with these issues.

A child's question about why tobacco is sold in stores raises other complications. Tobacco is the only product in the United States that kills when used as directed. The reasons that it is legally sold are historical, economic and political. Chapter 7 suggests some ways to discuss these issues.

If a tobacco user prompts the talk. Conversation may be constrained if the tobacco user who inspired it is present and aggressively defensive. In this case, perhaps only a comment or two can be exchanged. You will need to decide how much you can appropriately talk with children about their reactions to tobacco in particular circumstances.

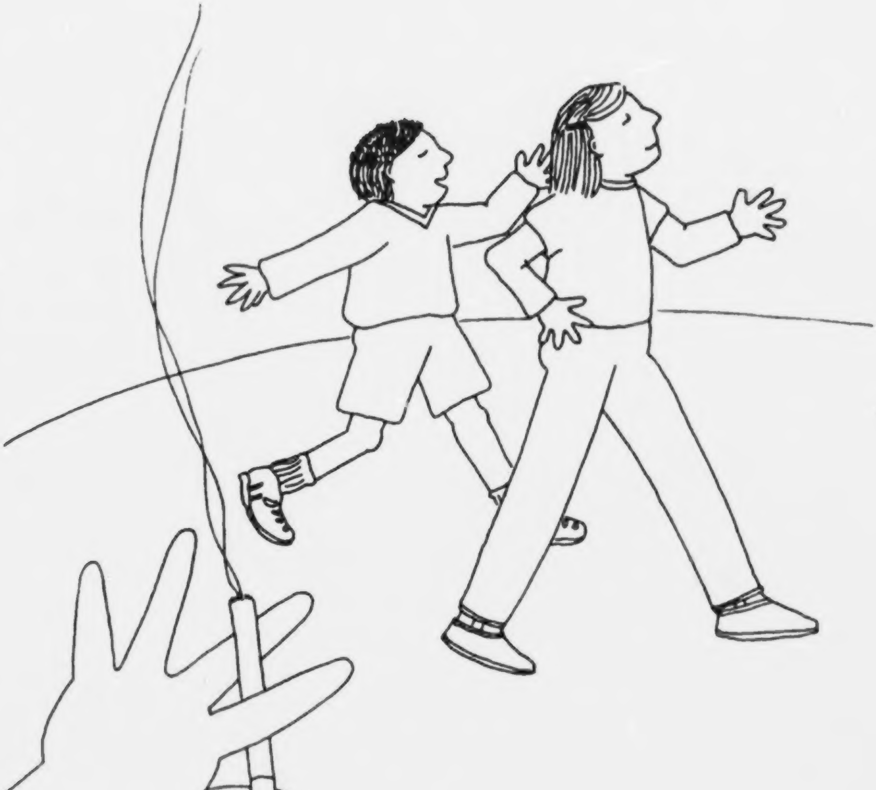
If children live with tobacco users. Talk also may be limited with children whose senses have been dulled by continuing exposure to tobacco use since birth. Be sure these children develop greater sensitivity to the smells and sights associated with tobacco use before spending much time on aversive reactions to the behaviors of smoking and chewing. In your initial conversations about tobacco with these children, concentrate on the first three goals of communication for this topic.

Messages to Reinforce

- Tobacco contains poisons.
- Tobacco is dirty.
- Using tobacco makes the environment dirty.
- Your nose and eyes give you important information about tobacco.

Chapter 4

I Don't Like to Be Around It



This chapter discusses how smoking and chewing tobacco affect other people. Children's right to a tobacco free environment is affirmed. They receive specific suggestions for asking others not to smoke or chew around them. Children also are made aware of smoking control efforts in the community.

Goals of Communication

Use material in this chapter to help children:

- Notice how they react when people use tobacco.
- Realize that cigarette smoke bothers most people, even smokers.
- Separate their reactions to smoking and chewing from their feelings about people who smoke and chew.
- Learn how to limit their exposure to tobacco use.
- Develop their assertiveness skills.
- Learn that smoking is not permitted in many places.

Starting the Talk

A child's comment that he or she doesn't like to be around tobacco is the best way to initiate talk on this topic. However, you may start the conversation by asking such questions as, "Is that woman's cigarette smoke bothering you?"... "How do you feel when your brother chews tobacco?"... "What do you think about the smell of Uncle Joe's cigar?"

What to Say

Many people don't like to be around cigarette smoke or chewing tobacco. Cigarette smoke smells bad. It gets in the clothes and hair of everyone around it. The brown juice from chewing tobacco looks disgusting, especially when chewers spit it out.

There are other good reasons for not liking to be around cigarette smoke. Smoking makes the air dirty. A room full of cigarette smoke can be dirtier than a smoggy city.

Tobacco bothers many people. Cigarette smoke bothers some people very much. It doesn't seem to bother other people at all. How do you feel? Does smoke from other people's cigarettes bother you?

Cigarette smoke can make your eyes burn and water. It can make your eyes feel itchy. Sometimes it turns them red. Cigarette smoke can stuff up your nose too.

Smoke can give you a headache and make you feel sick to your stomach. It can make you cough and feel like you can't breathe. If you have asthma or hay fever, cigarette smoke makes it worse.

Smelling and looking at the juice from chewing tobacco can also make you feel sick. This dark brown juice is a mixture of tobacco and saliva. Chewers must spit it out or swallow it when it collects in their mouths.

When you feel like you don't like being around tobacco, your body is sending you a message. Your body is telling you that tobacco isn't good for you. Listen to your body.

When the air is full of tobacco smoke, your body has to work harder to get the good air that it needs. This is especially hard on babies who live in homes full of cigarette smoke. They have to breathe faster than other babies to get enough clean air.

Children who grow up breathing smoke from other people's cigarettes can't breathe in as much good air as children who grow up with nonsmokers. This makes it harder for them to run and do well at sports.

Children who are exposed to a lot of cigarette smoke have other problems too. They get more colds and ear infections than children who don't live with smokers. This may be because smokers cough a lot. Their coughing could spread germs to the people around them.

Children who breathe smoke from other people's cigarettes breathe in the poison nicotine. They can have the same amount of nicotine in their bodies as people who smoke one or two cigarettes every day!

Most people are forced to breathe smoke from other people's cigarettes sometime in their lives. Sometimes they have to be around people who are chewing tobacco too.

Has this happened to you? Where have you breathed other people's smoke? In a restaurant? In the airport? At home? At a friend's house? Have you been around people who were chewing tobacco? How did this make you feel?

What can you do when tobacco bothers you? Sometimes it's hard for children who are near a person who is using tobacco to know what to do. You might ask the person not to use tobacco. But it can be hard to tell an adult or teenager not to smoke or chew. It's even harder if the adult is your parent or relative, or if the teenager is your big brother or sister.

If you say something about the smoking or chewing, the tobacco user might just ignore you. He or she might even yell at you or get very mad. And some people might keep on smoking or chewing, even after you ask them not to.

Very often children feel that they have to give in to bigger people. Does this mean you just have to put up with breathing someone else's smoke? Do you have to be stuck with someone else's tobacco juice? Here are some ideas to help you.

When something bothers you, the first thing you have to do is slow down and think. What is the problem? When we have a problem, we need to think carefully about exactly why we are bothered so we can explain our feelings clearly.

If someone is smoking or chewing it's easy to figure out what the problem is. You don't like cigarette smoke in your face. You don't like to be around tobacco spit.

After you know what's bothering you, think about what you can do. Here are five different things you can do when other people's cigarette smoking or tobacco chewing bothers you. You don't have to do all these things every time. You might do just one of them, or maybe two or three. You can decide which ideas might work for you.

1. You can ask the person not to smoke around you.

We don't always know what to say to a person who is doing something we don't like. One good way to handle this problem is just to ask the person to stop. You should do this politely. For example, you could say, "Please put out your cigarette."

Most smokers know that smoking bothers other people. Sometimes smoke even bothers smokers! If you ask someone like this not to smoke around you, and if you ask this person in a nice way, the person will probably put out his or her cigarette right away.

There are many different ways to ask someone not to smoke or chew. You could say, "Please don't smoke around me." Or you could say, "I wish you wouldn't chew tobacco when you're with me." Maybe you could say, "Our family doesn't like people to smoke or chew in our house." Practice different ways to ask people not to use tobacco until you find the words that seem easiest and best for you to say.

Some children like to use big words. Here's a story about a boy who did just that.

The boy was at a baseball game. A man nearby lit a cigarette. The smoke bothered everyone around him, but nobody said anything. Four teenage boys sitting nearby coughed loudly. Some people fanned the smoke away from their faces with their hands. One woman put a handkerchief over her nose.

The smoker was busy watching the ball game, so he didn't notice any of these things. He just kept puffing his cigarette.

The boy turned to the smoker and said, "Please extinguish your cigarette." The man was very surprised. He looked at the boy and said, "What?" The boy repeated, "Please extinguish your cigarette." The man said, "Oh, sure." And he put his cigarette out.

The teenagers looked at each other in amazement. The adults looked at each other in amazement too. The boy had solved the problem!

The boy in the story kept his request to the smoker very simple. He asked the smoker to put out his cigarette. When you ask people to do something, you will have better luck if you ask them to do just one simple thing.

When you ask people not to use tobacco, remember to keep your request very simple. Remember to be polite.

2. You can move away from the person who is smoking or chewing.

Some people may not stop using tobacco when you ask them. Then you need to find another way to get away from it. What if the smoker at the ballpark hadn't put out his cigarette? What could the boy have done? You're right. He could have moved.

Sometimes moving is a good solution. If you are inside, you could move to another room. You could go outside. If you have to stay in the same room with the person who is smoking or chewing, you could move closer to the door, or near an open window.

If you live with people who smoke, it may be hard to get away from it. But there are some things you might try. If people smoke at the table, you could politely ask them to wait to smoke until after you've finished eating. You might ask if you can eat in another place. You could ask to be excused from the table when someone starts to smoke.

If people in your family smoke, you could ask if they would mind not smoking in some rooms. You could ask them not to smoke in the place where you sleep. If this doesn't work, you could ask to keep a window open.

Riding in a car with people who smoke can be very uncomfortable. If you are in this situation, try asking the smokers in the car not to smoke until the drive is over. If they smoke, ask them to open a window. Then ask to sit near the window that is open.

3. You can say what you feel.

Your feelings are special. They are all your own. You are the only one who knows exactly how you feel. You have a right to your feelings. And you have a right to let others know how you feel. You can tell others that it bothers you to be around cigarette smoke and chewing tobacco. Even if people who smoke and chew don't stop when you ask them politely, you can tell them how you feel.

If someone you love smokes or chews and you don't like it, you can say, "I love you, but I don't love your tobacco." If this person wants to give you a hug, you can say, "I like to hug you, but I don't like to smell your tobacco."

If adults ask you to bring them cigarettes, matches, an ashtray, or their chewing tobacco, you can say, "I would like to help you, but I don't like to help you use tobacco."

When you talk about your feelings, it helps to begin by saying, "I feel...." That way people will know you are talking about yourself. For example, you could say, "I feel bothered by the smoke from your cigarette."

Other people might have different feelings and that's okay. Everyone has a right to his or her own feelings. But ***your*** feelings belong to ***you***. Your feelings are special. And you have a right to say how you feel about tobacco.

Maybe one of your friends has a Mom or Dad who smokes. The friend asks you to stay overnight. You think that spending the night with your friend would be fun, but you know the cigarette smoke will bother you. Stop and think. How do you feel? How would you tell your friend about your feelings?

You might say, "I'd really like to spend the night at your house. But the cigarette smoke bothers me." After you explain how you feel, you and your friend should think of ways to handle this problem. What could you do?

Maybe you could play outside at your friend's house. You might ask a parent to take you both to a movie. You and your friend might decide to stay overnight at your house. You might tell your friend's Mom or Dad that cigarette smoke bothers you. Maybe your friend's Mom or Dad will have an idea about what you can do.

4. You can ask an adult to help you.

If you can't get away from someone who's using tobacco and it bothers you a lot, you can ask an adult to help you. Try telling one of your parents or grandparents how being around tobacco makes you feel. You could tell an aunt or an uncle, or maybe a neighbor.

A very good person to tell is a nurse or a doctor. You could tell your teacher. You could tell someone at your church or synagogue. You can tell me.

Ask the person you talk with to help you with your problem. Maybe this person can talk with the smoker or chewer about how much tobacco use bothers you. The person might have some other ideas about what you can do. When you have a problem, it helps to have another person working on it with you.

5. You can find out if there's a no smoking section.

A long time ago, when many of the adults that you know were children, smoking was very popular. No one knew tobacco hurt the people who used it. Many people smoked cigarettes and they smoked them almost everywhere.

Then scientists discovered smoking was bad for the people who used it, and for others around them. People who were bothered by smoke put their heads together. They told each other their feelings. They found out that smoke bothered many people. They wanted clean air around them.

These people began asking other people not to smoke around them. They told people who owned restaurants they didn't like to eat around cigarette smoke. Many restaurants set up no smoking sections for people who don't like to eat around cigarette smoke.

The same thing happened on buses and airplanes. At first, all the smokers had to sit in one special section of the bus or airplane. So many people wanted to sit where the air was clean that less and less space was available for smokers. Finally, laws were passed. Now smoking isn't allowed on any airplane that flies in the United States. Smoking isn't allowed on many buses either.

Smoking isn't permitted in many places. Can you think of places where people never smoke? Have you seen a no smoking sign somewhere? Where did you see it? (bus, taxi, elevator, movie theater, store, restaurant, doctor's office, hospital, school, gas station, airport, airplane, library).

Do you remember what the no smoking sign looked like? Is this a good place for a no smoking sign? Why? Where else would you like to see a no smoking sign?

Many communities now don't allow smoking in any public place. This helps to keep the air clean for everybody. Do you think this is a good idea?

Many families don't allow smoking in their homes. They ask visitors not to smoke. If the visitors want to smoke, they must go outside. Does your family do this? Do you think it's a good idea? Talk with other people in your family and find out how they feel. Then decide together whether you want your home to be smoke free.

Activities

—HAT TALK—

Play this simple game to find out what messages children are hearing from adults about tobacco. You need two hats, one for a woman and one for a man. Make your hand into a fist and hold it in front of your mouth like a microphone. Say:

"This is your favorite television reporter. Today, we want to find out how people feel about being around cigarette smoke."

Place the woman's hat on a child's head and ask,

"Ms. Jones, tell us, how do you feel about being around cigarette smoke?"

Put your pretend microphone in front of the child's mouth and hold it there until she expresses an opinion.

Repeat, changing hats, children, and pretend names of adults until a variety of viewpoints have been expressed. Change questions by asking about smokeless tobacco, cigars or pipes instead of cigarettes.

To conclude the game, speak into your "microphone" again:

"We've heard from some people who really don't like being around cigarette smoke at all (and possibly, from some people who don't seem to mind it and from some who said they enjoy it). From asking thousands of people this question, we know that most Americans don't like being around tobacco smoke.

"We also know that people have a lot of different feelings about this, so what you hear depends on who you ask. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you so much for sharing your feelings with us today. We hope to talk to you again on our television show!"

—PLEASE DON'T SMOKE!—

Play this game to give children practice in asking others not to smoke around them.

"There are many polite ways to ask a person not to smoke. Let's practice some of these so you can choose the one you like best. Listen carefully, and then repeat what I say so you can see how it feels to you. Ready? Here's the first way. 'Please don't smoke around me.' Now you say it. How did that feel?"

Ask children to repeat each of the following statements.

"Smoking bothers me. Please don't do it."

"Please don't smoke while I'm eating."

"I wish you wouldn't smoke right now."

"Please extinguish your cigarette."

"Could you please smoke outside."

Now tell children to make the request in their own words. "Can you think of another way we could ask someone not to smoke?"

Each time a statement is volunteered, say "Let's try that one out." Then ask the group to repeat it. If you are talking with just one child, you can repeat each request and ask the child how it sounds.

You can help children develop self-expression by showing them how changing the emphasis on a word can change the meaning of a simple request. For example:

"Let's see how we can make the same request sound different by changing the word we say the loudest. I'll show you by saying 'Please extinguish your cigarette' in four different ways.

'Please extinguish your cigarette.... Please **extinguish** your cigarette.... Please extinguish **your** cigarette.... Please extinguish your **cigarette**.' Now you try it. Which way did you like best?"

Continue this activity:

"We tried a lot of different ways to ask people not to smoke, just like people try on lots of different shoes at the shoe store. Which way do you like best? Take a minute and choose your own special way of asking someone not to smoke around you.

Now let's practice. Pretend a smoker is sitting in this chair. Come over here, one by one. Tell us how you'd ask the smoker not to smoke."

Help children develop additional skills in assertiveness and human relations by taking the place of the pretend smoker yourself:

"I'm going to pretend I'm the smoker so you can practice asking a grown-up not to smoke. Watch out, because I may surprise you. As each one of you asks me to stop smoking, I'm going to answer in a different way. I might get angry. I might tell you to go away. I might ignore you. See if you can keep talking to me until I stop smoking."

—NO SMOKING SIGNS—

Give children practice in making and explaining choices by having them select their favorite no smoking sign. By learning that many types of no smoking signs are available, children learn this message is popular with many people. They learn the message not to smoke can be communicated in writing, as well as verbally.

Collect three or more no smoking signs or posters. Several sources of posters designed for families and young children are listed in the resource section of this book. Also, hardware or variety stores have placards and signs with a selection of no smoking messages. Ask others, including children, to help you get signs for this activity.

"There are many different ways to say you don't want cigarette smoke around you. Sometimes you say it by speaking. Sometimes you say it by coughing or waving smoke away, or putting a handkerchief over your nose. Sometimes you say it by getting up and moving.

"You also can ask people not to smoke with a sign or a picture. Many people put a no smoking sign up at home or at work. Here are some signs (or posters) that ask people not to smoke."

If children can read ask them to read each message. If they are not yet reading, help them with the words.

"Look at each sign carefully. Which sign do you like best? Think about why you like that sign. In just a minute, we'll find out what you decided."

Ask each child to point to the sign he or she likes best. Have the child explain why he or she likes the sign. Which features of each sign (or poster) are attractive? Compare the shape, size, color and other aspects of the signs. For example:

"Jamie likes this sign because it has no words. That way everybody can understand it, even people who can't read.... Susie likes this sign because it's polite. It says 'Thank you for not smoking.' ... Jeff likes this little sign with the key chain on it because it can hang inside a car.... Sarah likes this poster because she likes the family in the picture."

After the signs have been discussed, say:

"There are many ways to ask people not to smoke, even with a sign. We are lucky we have many no smoking signs to choose from."

Display the no smoking signs for a week or even permanently.

—NO SMOKING ZONES—

Develop children's skills in observation. Plan a walking tour to observe no smoking signs in the community. Or when making a field trip for another purpose, ask children to watch for no smoking signs. When one is found, point it out to everyone.

Ask children to look for no smoking signs in the community on their own. After a day or two, ask them where they saw the signs. Practice counting by totaling the number of children who saw signs and the number of children who did not. To practice addition, find out how many signs each child observed and then find the total number of signs seen by children in the group.

"Many people in our community don't like to be around cigarette smoke. We have found _____ no smoking signs."

—TOBACCO FREE ART—

Help children express themselves through art.

"Let's make a poster to take home that will tell your family how you feel about being around tobacco. You might make this poster for your bedroom or the kitchen or somewhere else. What will the poster say? It might say 'No smoking,' 'I want to be tobacco free,' or 'Tobacco-free zone'. What else might your poster say? Make up your own 'tobacco free' sign."

After the children finish their posters, put them up for display. At the end of the day, children can take them home.

—How Did You Do It? —

Discuss and support children's efforts to be assertive in limiting their exposure to tobacco.

"Have you ever asked someone not to smoke or chew around you? How did you do it? What happened?"

After children have talked about their experiences in requesting others not to use tobacco, help them to analyze each approach reported.

"How did you feel when you asked the person not to use tobacco?

"Were you polite? Did you keep your request simple? If the person stopped, did you say 'thank you'?

"Why do you think the person listened to you and stopped using tobacco?"...or "Why do you think the person kept using tobacco even after you asked him or her not to?"

"If you were in the same situation again, what would you do?"

Reinforce children's efforts to be assertive:

"I'm proud of you for asking someone not to use tobacco around you. I know this took courage and you were brave. I'm also happy we had a chance to talk about this and that you've thought about how you would ask someone not to use tobacco again."

Special Issues

If children live with tobacco users. Some children will come from families with parents, siblings, or other relatives who use tobacco. These children may be so accustomed to cigarette smoke and chewing tobacco that being near users doesn't bother them anymore. Helping these children to become aware of negative physiological reactions to tobacco use is an important goal for prevention. Nevertheless, continuing this conversation can get you into tricky territory.

Children may have difficulty considering their reactions to tobacco use apart from their general feelings about family members who smoke or chew. If their relationships with tobacco users are positive, they may see tobacco use in a positive light. Even if they don't like being around cigarette smoke or chewing tobacco, they may be reluctant to admit it because this seems like criticizing a family member or friend. Alternatively, some children may be embarrassed to acknowledge that members of their family use tobacco.

The problems are more difficult for children whose parents and older siblings are aggressive and domineering. These children may feel powerless in their family relationships. They, too, may have difficulty separating their reactions to tobacco use from their feelings about tobacco users. But talking about tobacco use with these children may open a Pandora's box of deeper issues, including some which they do not understand or may not have thought about previously.

The parents, siblings or other relatives of these children might not care if their tobacco use bothers other family members. In some cases, children who comment on smoking or chewing by adults and older youth in the family risk verbal or physical abuse. Some parents may get angry at you for exploring their children's feelings about exposure to tobacco use by others.

You must be the judge of how far it is appropriate for you to go in this conversation. Be sure to point out that you can love a person a lot and still not like that person's smoking or chewing. Close attention to children's comments and reactions will help you make appropriate decisions. Encourage children to express their feelings if they wish, but be sensitive to their concerns and fears.

Acknowledge problems in family relationships that children may bring up, but don't suggest solutions will be unrealistically easy. You may want to return to this topic as your continuing relationship with a child spontaneously creates the opportunity. In some cases, you may decide it is important to plan a time to talk again with a particular child, or with others who care for the child.

You may be able to help children with special problems think through their options for reducing their exposure to cigarette smoke or tobacco chewing. Hopefully you can support them if they decide to try doing something about their problem. At the very least, you can provide these children with a safe place where they can express their feelings about tobacco use by others.

Messages to Reinforce

- Most people don't like to be around cigarette smoke or tobacco chewing and spitting.
- You can love a person and still not like it if they smoke cigarettes or chew tobacco.
- Children can politely ask others not to smoke or chew near them.
- Children can move away from cigarette smoke or ask to open a window.
- Children can tell others how they feel about being around cigarettes and chewing tobacco.
- Children who can't get away from cigarette smoke can ask an adult to help.
- Cigarette smoking is not permitted in many places.

Chapter 5

Why Do People Smoke and Chew?

This chapter discusses why people start using tobacco and why they continue, even when they know they're hurting themselves. Nicotine is described as a drug that sneaks up on people to introduce addiction. Reasons that people commonly give for using tobacco are discussed as examples of how nicotine changes the way people think. The difficulty that smokers and chewers often have in quitting is explained. Children learn they can't make someone quit, but that there are things they can do to help.

Goals of Communication

Use the material in this chapter to help children:

- Understand why people start using tobacco.
- Learn that the nicotine in tobacco is a drug.
- Understand that people who use tobacco become addicted to nicotine.
- Begin to understand what addiction means.
- Realize that most people who use tobacco would like to quit.
- Understand that stopping tobacco use can be very difficult.
- Think about ways they can help smokers and chewers who are trying to quit.
- Appreciate that communities try to help people stop using tobacco.

Starting the Talk

Children are likely to start talking about this topic by asking why people smoke or chew. However, the circumstances that prompt the question may differ.

Very young children who have seldom seen a person smoking or chewing will probably first want to know what the smoker or chewer is doing. Questions about why they do it may not follow until later.

Older youngsters or very young ones who live with tobacco users probably have more specific concerns in mind when they ask why people smoke and chew. If cigarette smoke or tobacco spit bothers them, they may ask this question in frustration. Children who have aversive reactions to tobacco use also may be puzzled about why anyone would choose to smoke or chew. Those who have heard that smoking and chewing are harmful may wonder why people do something that can hurt them.

Some children may see smokers and chewers as attractive role models, and they'd like to know how using tobacco fits into the secret of their success. Some children may ask because they're thinking about smoking or chewing themselves.

Since children may ask why people use tobacco for different reasons, ask a question or two yourself to be sure you understand the child's concern or interest. You could say, "That's an interesting question. What made you think about it?" Or, "Are you wondering about a particular person or are you wondering about people in general?"

You may begin the talk by referring to the circumstances that prompt children's questions. Tobacco use by another person can trigger conversation. For example, "I can see that the smoke from that woman's cigarette bothers you. Don't you wonder why she smokes?" Or, "Look at how deeply that man breathes in the smoke from his cigarette. Do you think he is enjoying it?"

Tobacco use by a person the child admires provides a natural opening for talking about why people smoke or chew. For example, if children see an attractive woman smoking, you could comment, "She always looks so pretty. Why do you suppose she smokes?" As you watch a ball game, you could say about a player, "With all that talent going for him, don't you wonder why he chews?"

Tobacco advertisements can be a springboard to conversation. "Look at that pretty picture of people sailing a boat. Do you think that picture might make someone think that using tobacco is fun?" If children see tobacco samples being distributed in a mall or at a fair, say "Do you think receiving a free sample of tobacco might make people try smoking (or chewing)?"

What to Say

When you see someone smoking a cigarette or a pipe or a cigar, do you wonder why they do it? Do you think it's strange that people set tobacco on fire and then breathe in the smoke? People usually try to get away from smoke of all kinds. Most people don't like tobacco smoke. Do you wonder why smokers seem to like it?

Have you wondered why some people chew tobacco? Why would people put old chopped-up leaves in their mouths and keep them there? Why would they chew tobacco when it fills the mouth with brown juice that they have to swallow or spit out?

Here's a story to help you understand why people use tobacco.

Why did people first start using tobacco? A long time ago, people didn't know much about tobacco. They didn't know it could hurt them. So when they saw other people using it, they tried it.

When people from Europe first came to America, they learned about tobacco from the Indians. American Indians used tobacco in special ceremonies. They didn't use it all the time. When the people from Europe saw Indians smoking tobacco, they were amazed. They took tobacco home as a special present.

Some people in Europe started to smoke tobacco. Others ground the tobacco into powder and sniffed it up their noses. Using tobacco became very popular.

The people from Europe didn't use tobacco just on special occasions. They started to use it all the time. This often happens when people use tobacco. Growing tobacco and sending it to Europe became an important way for Americans to earn money when the country was new.

People in America bought tobacco too. Because they were starting a new country, they wanted to be different from the people in Europe. So they used tobacco in different ways. American men didn't sniff tobacco up their noses. They put tobacco in their mouths and chewed it. Some men chopped tobacco up and rolled it in paper to make cigarettes that they smoked.

There were many different ways to use tobacco in the old days. People still use tobacco in many different ways.

Chewing tobacco was the most popular way to use tobacco in America for a long time. Then people learned about germs. Many people got very upset about tobacco chewing and spitting. They called it a dirty habit. They said spitting could spread germs. So tobacco chewing stopped being popular with most people.

Then someone invented a machine that rolled tobacco into cigarettes. People didn't have to roll cigarettes one at a time anymore. Cigarette smoking became very popular with men. Men who saw other men smoking cigarettes tried smoking them too. Pretty soon, most men smoked cigarettes.

In the old days, most women didn't smoke or chew tobacco. Women wanted to look pretty, and no one thought smoking and chewing looked pretty.

The people who made cigarettes knew that if they could get women to smoke, they would sell more cigarettes and earn more money. So they put pictures of pretty women smoking and having fun in magazines and newspapers and other places. These advertisements changed the way people thought about women and cigarettes. Soon women started smoking too.

Why do people start using tobacco today? Today we know tobacco hurts the people who use it. Now almost no grown-ups start to smoke or chew tobacco. Most adults who smoke and chew these days started when they were children or teenagers. And most of them are very sorry that they started to use tobacco.

Most teenagers have heard that using tobacco can hurt them. Most teenagers who know this don't want to smoke or chew. They think that smoking and chewing are dirty and stupid things to do. These teenagers are already being very grown up.

But some teenagers are curious about tobacco. They see other people smoking and chewing, and they want to find out what it's like. Sometimes they think smoking and chewing will make them look older or tougher. Sometimes they think smoking and chewing will make them popular. Sometimes they think smoking and chewing will be fun.

People who make tobacco want teenagers to think all of these things. They take pictures of smokers having fun in nice places. Have you seen some of these pictures? The people in these pictures are good-looking. They are healthy. And they are popular.

These pictures make you think that smoking and chewing won't hurt you. The pictures try to make you think smoking and chewing are good things to do. The tobacco companies put these pictures on billboards and in magazines where teenagers will see them. Remember the story about how women started smoking cigarettes? The tobacco companies still do the same things to get people to start smoking and chewing.

Teenagers see people smoking or chewing tobacco on television, in movies, and in real life too. When some teenagers see other people using tobacco, they think they should use tobacco too. If teenagers know people who use tobacco, they might smoke or chew to be like these special people.

Why do people keep using tobacco? Teenagers who want to try tobacco pretend that it won't hurt them. These teenagers are wrong. Tobacco will fool them. Let me tell you more about how this happens.

1. Tobacco has a drug in it.

Tobacco contains a chemical called *nicotine*. Nicotine is a very strong poison. Nicotine is a drug too. A drug is a chemical that changes the way the body works.

Some drugs are helpful. They can help people when they're sick. These helpful drugs are called medicines. Sometimes doctors give sick people medicines to make their bodies work better. Have you ever taken medicine when you were sick? Did the medicine help your body get well?

Doctors know a lot about helpful drugs. They carefully choose the right kind of medicine to help the person who is sick. They carefully give sick people the right amount of medicine to help them get better.

People whose bodies work well should never take medicine or other drugs. People with healthy bodies don't need drugs to change how their bodies work.

Some drugs are bad for people. Bad drugs change people's bodies in ways that hurt them. The nicotine in tobacco is one of these bad drugs. Smoking and chewing tobacco both change people's bodies in ways that hurt them.

2. The nicotine in tobacco is addictive.

Nicotine is a sneaky drug. It changes the way that people think about smoking and chewing. It makes them want to smoke and chew all the time.

Most people don't like tobacco when they first smoke or taste it. When they try smoking a cigarette, they cough. The smoke hurts their noses and throats. It burns their eyes and makes them water. When people first try chewing tobacco, they usually hate the taste. The loose tobacco in their mouths feels disgusting. When people first smoke or chew tobacco, they often get dizzy or sick to the stomach. Nicotine hasn't fooled these people yet. Their bodies are telling them not to use tobacco.

When some people first use tobacco, they hate it so much that they never try it again. But nicotine fools some people the very first time they try tobacco. These people get a pleasant feeling or a "buzz" that they like. These people look forward to smoking or chewing again. They have another cigarette or some more chew as soon as they get the chance.

Other people think that maybe smoking or chewing would be better if they tried it a second time. So they try it again. And then another time. And then another time after that. These people are learning how to use tobacco. And nicotine is sneaking up on them.

Each time a person smokes or chews, the nicotine in tobacco changes the way the person thinks just a little bit more. The nicotine makes messages from the body seem less important.

Pretty soon the tobacco doesn't taste so bad. That is because nicotine makes it harder to taste anything very well. After people smoke cigarettes for a while, they don't notice how bad the smoke smells. The nicotine has changed how their noses work.

Each time people smoke or chew tobacco, nicotine changes their bodies in other ways. After a while they don't get dizzy or sick to the stomach when they use tobacco. They begin to like the way that nicotine makes them feel.

Very few people can smoke and chew just a little. The nicotine in tobacco makes people want to smoke or chew some more. Before they know it, they are smoking and chewing a lot. If they don't smoke or chew for an hour or two, they start to feel grumpy. They want to smoke or chew right away. They are in a hurry to use tobacco.

The nicotine in tobacco has changed the way these people think. They think they need to smoke or chew tobacco many times each day. These people have become *addicted* to the drug nicotine.

People who are addicted to nicotine feel a strong need to smoke or chew tobacco. Think about how you feel when you need to eat or sleep but you can't. Smokers feel something like that when their bodies need nicotine and they can't have it.

3. People who are addicted to nicotine can't go long without tobacco.

Have you ever seen people who are in a hurry to smoke? Airports are a good place to see this. Since smoking is not permitted on airplanes, smokers hurry to have a cigarette before they get on board. Smokers who are getting off an airplane hurry to the part of the airport where smoking is permitted. When they light a cigarette, they breathe the smoke deep into their bodies. Most of them take several big puffs in a row. These smokers are trying to get nicotine into their bodies very fast. They are addicted.

Can you think of other places where people are in a hurry to smoke? Since smoking is not permitted in most movie theaters, you can see smokers hurrying to light a cigarette as soon as they are outside the theater. In hospitals where smoking is not permitted, you usually can see smokers right outside the hospital door. You will find lots of cigarette butts on the ground just outside places where smoking is not allowed.

People who chew tobacco get addicted to nicotine too. Some of them keep snuff or a wad of chewing tobacco in their mouths all the time. When they have sucked the nicotine out of the wad, they add more snuff or chew because their bodies want more nicotine. Sometimes smokers chew tobacco when they are in places that do not allow smoking.

People who are addicted to nicotine can't go long without tobacco. If they run out of cigarettes or chew, they borrow tobacco from someone else or hurry to the store. If the store is closed or far away and no one nearby has tobacco, they might smoke old cigarette butts out of the trash. Nicotine takes away people's choices about what they do.

4. Smoking and chewing aren't just habits.

Some people say that smoking and chewing are just habits. A habit is something you do without thinking about it. Some habits are good, like brushing your teeth after you eat or always hanging up your jacket. Some habits, like biting your fingernails, are bad. Habits are hard to change. We get used to doing certain things at certain times, and we do them without thinking much about them.

Smoking and chewing might seem like habits because people sometimes smoke and chew without thinking about what they are doing. People who smoke and chew also have a very hard time quitting.

But smoking and chewing are not just habits. Habits don't change the way the body works. Habits don't cause headaches when people stop. People who bite their fingernails don't get cranky when they quit. If you can't find your toothbrush, you don't stop doing everything else until you can brush your teeth. If you can't hang up your jacket, you don't keep thinking about it until you get the jacket put away.

All these things happen to smokers and chewers. They feel bad when they don't use tobacco. They have trouble thinking about other things until they can smoke or chew again. That is because tobacco contains the drug nicotine and people who use tobacco become addicted to this drug.

Tobacco use is more than a habit. The nicotine in tobacco changes the way the body works. Nicotine changes how people think.

5. Nicotine fools people.

Most smokers and chewers know tobacco hurts their bodies. Some of these people explain their tobacco use by making excuses. You might have heard some.

Teenagers who want to try tobacco for the first time might say, "One cigarette won't hurt me" or "I just want to see how chew tastes." After they have tried tobacco several times, they say "I can quit any time I want to." But they usually don't quit. Nicotine has started to fool them. Nicotine makes it very hard to stop smoking or chewing tobacco.

People who smoke and chew often talk about why they use tobacco. Some people say they like the way it tastes. Others smoke or chew to keep from eating too much. Some say they use tobacco to relax or calm down. Others smoke or chew so they can work long and hard. Some people say that using tobacco keeps them from getting bored.

How can tobacco work for people in so many different ways? Each person who uses tobacco can tell you special reasons for using it. This is another way that sneaky nicotine fools people.

Nicotine makes each person like to smoke or chew for his or her own special reasons. That way, no matter what people like, tobacco becomes very important to them. Nicotine is a strong and dangerous drug to fool people like this.

Even though people explain why they smoke or chew in many different ways, they are all saying that they need to use tobacco. Nicotine has changed the way these people think. Nicotine tells them what to do.

Some smokers and chewers find it hard to explain why they use tobacco when they know they shouldn't. These people might get angry if you ask them why they smoke or chew. They might tell you it's none of your business.

Other smokers and chewers are honest about their problem. They'll say they're addicted. They'll say they're sorry they ever started smoking and chewing. Many of these people will tell you never to even try smoking or chewing. And I hope you never will. I hope that nicotine never fools you.

6. It's hard to stop using tobacco.

Most adults who use tobacco would like to quit. This can be very difficult.

If people who are addicted to nicotine don't smoke a cigarette or chew tobacco, they may get very bad headaches. Sometimes they feel very sad and gloomy. Sometimes they get cranky and grumpy. They feel so bad that they give in and smoke a cigarette or chew tobacco, even when they don't want to. Their changed bodies don't work well. They feel like they need more nicotine, even though the nicotine is hurting them.

If a person you care about is addicted to tobacco, you can't make this person stop smoking or chewing. What can you do? You can tell this person that you wish he or she would stop using tobacco. But you can't make the person stop. Because stopping is so hard, smokers and chewers have to decide for themselves that they want to stop. Then they have to work very hard at quitting.

Have you ever heard a smoker say, "I'd like to quit, but I can't do it"? Have you ever heard someone who chews tobacco say, "I have trouble getting off the chew"? Even though these people are having trouble quitting, they are taking an important step. They are thinking about quitting. They are not letting nicotine do their thinking for them.

Sometimes smokers and chewers have to work at quitting for a long time before they succeed. Sometimes they quit and then start to smoke or chew again. Do you know someone who tried to quit and started using tobacco again? Most smokers and chewers stop and start using tobacco many times before they can finally quit for good. The important thing is that they keep trying until they quit and never start again.

Helping someone quit. Many people want to help people stop using tobacco. Doctors know some things to do that can help smokers and chewers quit. Organizations like the American Cancer Society and the American Lung Association help people stop smoking. Some hospitals and health clinics can help too. All these places can tell smokers and chewers about other kinds of help in the community for people who want to stop using tobacco.

If you know a smoker or chewer who is trying to quit, you can help too. First, ask what you can do to help. The smoker or chewer might not think of anything you can do. Because this person is fighting nicotine in the body, a lot of the work of quitting must be done by the person alone. Still, you might be able to help.

Tell the person how happy you are that he or she is quitting. Ask the person to have a glass of juice with you. If the person usually smokes a cigarette after dinner, suggest that you go for a walk together just as soon as dinner is over. You also might suggest that you go someplace together where smoking is not permitted—to a movie, the library or a museum.

The person might listen to the nicotine and smoke a cigarette or chew tobacco. If this happens, try to be as understanding as you can. Say you know it's hard to quit. Say you hope the person will try to stop again.

Remember, you can't make a person stop smoking or chewing. Smokers and chewers have to stop themselves.

Watch out for nicotine! Now that you know more about tobacco, you can understand better why you should never smoke or chew. The nicotine in tobacco is sneaky and dangerous. If you never try tobacco, nicotine will never to able to sneak up on you.

Activities

—SNEAKY NICOTINE—

Modify the game of hide-and-seek and have a lively time.

"Let's change the game of hide-and-seek to see how sneaky nicotine can be. When it's your turn to be it, we'll call you 'nicotine' instead. The rest of us will hide. 'Nicotine' will try to sneak up on each of you and tag you. If 'nicotine' catches you first, you're addicted. Then it will be your turn to be nicotine and see if you can sneak up on somebody else."

—WHERE SMOKERS SMOKE—

Look for evidence of tobacco addiction in the community. Visit a public place where smoking is not allowed. Possible choices include a movie theater, a museum, a hospital or a library.

"People are not allowed to smoke inside here. Do you think that smokers are in a hurry to have a cigarette when they leave this building? Let's pretend we're detectives and see if we can find any evidence. Let's walk around and find where the smokers go when they come outside to smoke.

"Do you see a big ashtray here? Are there cigarette butts in it? Are there cigarette butts on the ground? If we sit (stand) nearby and watch a while, do you think we will see a smoker in a hurry to have a cigarette? Do you think the smoker is addicted to nicotine?"

—WHY DO PEOPLE SMOKE?—

Encourage children to find out for themselves why people smoke or chew tobacco by talking with a smoker or a chewer. This can reinforce your conversations with children about the power of addiction. (Some smokers and chewers may rationalize their smoking habits. This activity should be used only if you know what the tobacco user will say or if you can arrange a follow-up conversation with children to discuss it.)

"Do you know someone who smokes or chews every day? This might be someone who lives with you or maybe another relative like an aunt or uncle. It might be a neighbor or someone who works at a store where your family goes. The next time you see this person, ask this person why they use tobacco. Ask them if they ever thought about quitting or if they ever tried to quit. Ask them if they think quitting would be hard."

—CALLING FOR HELP—

Reinforce the idea that people in the community want to help smokers quit.

Before doing this activity with children, check the yellow pages of your telephone directory to identify the heading used to list resources to stop smoking. If you live in a small community, such resources may be available only in a larger neighboring city. Check the telephone directory for the listing nearest you.

"Let's see if our community has people who can help people who want to quit smoking. Let's see if our phone book lists any numbers that smokers can call for help. First let's check the yellow pages under 'Smoking Information and Treatment'. How many numbers are there that a smoker could call for help?

"Where else could smokers find help? They could call a doctor or the local health department. There are many doctors in our community, so each smoker can look up the telephone number of the doctor he or she goes to. Here is the place in the phone book where all the doctors' numbers are listed. Now let's look up the number of the health department."

To conclude this activity, say:

"I'm glad you're learning how to use the phone book. This is a good place to find many kinds of help.

—CHANGING OUR WAYS—

This activity can help children understand that people who use tobacco have a very hard time quitting. Be sure to remind them that tobacco use is an *addiction*. It is much harder to stop doing something that's an addiction than it is to stop doing something that is simply a habit.

"Do you have any habits? Think about the things you do every single day. Do you always brush your teeth before you go to sleep at night? Is there a certain time that you always watch television?

"Do you chew the eraser on your pencil? Do you bite your fingernails? Do you suck your thumb? Do you twist your hair around your finger? All these things are habits.

"Let's find out how hard it is to stop a habit. Each of us will pick one habit. Then we'll try not to do that habit just for one day.

"What will help you remember to stop doing your habit? Will you ask people to remind you? Would it help to tie a string around your finger?

"Sometimes changing the time or place where you do your habit can help you remember not to do it. For example, if you want to stop putting your feet on the furniture when you watch television, try sitting in a different place.

"Another good way to stop a habit is to do something else instead. If you catch yourself chewing the eraser on your pencil, stop—and rub your finger over the pencil instead. Instead of sucking your thumb, try holding it in your hand and pulling on it a little."

After the trial period, talk about children's experiences.

"What did you learn about habits? What happened? When you tried to stop, did you think about the habit more? Did you try doing something else instead? What helped most? Now that you have tried to stop a habit, do you think stopping is hard or easy?

"Giving up tobacco is much, much harder than stopping a habit. When you tried to stop your habit, did you get a headache? Did you want to do your habit so much that you couldn't think about anything else? Did you get sad or cranky?

"People who try to stop using tobacco face hard problems like this.

That's one big reason why most people who use tobacco wish they had never started to smoke or chew. That's why you should never start."

Special Issues

Difficult concepts. Young children, especially those under the age of six or seven, may have difficulty understanding the concept of addiction. Try to introduce the ideas in this chapter gradually, making just one or two simple points each time you talk.

If reasons for using tobacco are not discussed, children may reach conclusions that encourage smoking and chewing. Children who observe people smoking and chewing realize that this behavior must serve some purpose. Children who see others using tobacco may infer that smoking and chewing are not nearly so harmful as some people say. They may decide that tobacco use is so pleasurable that any potential damage it may cause is not worth considering. They also may conclude that smokers and chewers don't have to worry about the consequences of their behavior. This can be an attractive thought indeed!

Children who live with tobacco users. Children from families with members who use tobacco may feel uncomfortable talking about reasons why people smoke and chew. They may feel like they're talking about parents or other relatives behind their backs. They might worry that the talk will lead to criticism of someone they love. And they may fear that such criticism will reflect negatively on themselves.

Talking with children about reasons for smoking and chewing shouldn't make them feel uncomfortable or promote negative communication between children and tobacco users in their families. Instead the conversation should help children talk about reasons for tobacco use with adults or older siblings who smoke and chew.

However, children from families where children aren't allowed to question adult behavior may be afraid to ask parents or other relatives why they smoke or chew. In families where tobacco use is already an issue, this problem can become even more complicated. Perhaps one parent smokes and the other constantly complains about it. Or a child may know that an older brother or sister secretly smokes even though parents strictly forbid it.

Children living in such circumstances may be influenced by the roles they play in the family. Some children may attack smokers and chewers. Others may attempt to defend family members by defending their tobacco use.

You must be the judge about how to proceed in such situations. Depending on your relationship to the family, you may choose to discuss your observations and concerns with some family members. In cases where children show multiple signs of living in a troubled family, consider seeking the advice of a school counselor or other resource person.

If you smoke or chew. A child's question about why "people" use tobacco may be directed at finding out why *you* smoke or chew. This may be an opening ploy to get into another question, "Why won't you quit?" Try to be very honest in answering these questions. In talking about reasons why people use tobacco, be careful that your comments don't rationalize or justify smoking and chewing. You may wish to review the section for smokers and chewers in the introduction before talking about this topic with children.

When children try tobacco. If you enjoy talking with children about their friends and activities, one day you are bound to hear that someone tried smoking or chewing tobacco. This report may invite conversation. For example, a child might say "Guess who I saw smoking?" or "Guess who tried chew today?"

This is a critical moment. The child will be watching for your reactions. Begin by expressing your surprise and then help the child to tell the story.

Asking a series of short questions is a good way to do this. "Is it someone I know? Is it someone in your class at school? Is it someone who has been to our house? When did you see (or hear about) this? Where did this happen? Who else was there?" Be sure to ask these questions conversationally. Keep your voice calm and friendly.

By encouraging the child to tell you the tobacco story, you open the way for further talk. You also show that you will listen before offering comments or judgments. As you hear more about the situation, you will discover whether your child was directly involved, an observer, or merely the recipient of second-hand information.

You also will learn more about the circumstances in children's lives that facilitate experimental tobacco use. This information will better prepare you to help the child think about his or her reactions to the event and its implications.

Ask the child, "What did you think when you saw (or heard about) this?" A very important question to explore is "Why do you think ___________ tried smoking (or chewing)?" Review possible motives for experimenting with tobacco, and lead into content covered in this chapter. Questions you might ask include, "Do you think ___________ was just going along with the other kids? Do you think he (or she) was trying to show off? Was he (or she) trying to look older?"

Express sadness that the child who tried tobacco wasn't able to handle the situation in a better way. For example, "I'm sorry Stacey feels she has to smoke to make friends." Talk about the circumstances that led Stacey to try tobacco. How did she get into this situation? How could she have avoided it? What else could she have done to make friends?

Focus on Stacey's real problem. Talk again about better ways she could go about getting what she seems to want (friends). Talk again about things your child might do to help her. Help your child to realize that smoking won't solve Stacey's problem.

Express sympathy for Stacey. "I'm sorry to hear Stacey is having trouble. I hope that she won't let herself get caught in the tobacco trap. Let me know how she is doing." Inquire about Stacey in a few days, and again in another week or two.

This approach demonstrates genuine concern for the child who has tried tobacco. It shifts attention away from the event of smoking or chewing to problems children face as they grow up. Discussing a specific instance where a child tried tobacco provides you with the opportunity to teach children they can trust you to help them understand and deal with new situations.

Perhaps most important, children will learn how you might react if they were to try tobacco themselves. You will have passed a crucial test. They can tell you about it.

Children who report that another child tried smoking or chewing may be telling you indirectly that they tried tobacco themselves. This might come out as they talk to you about the other child's experience. If this happens, the approach described above is recommended.

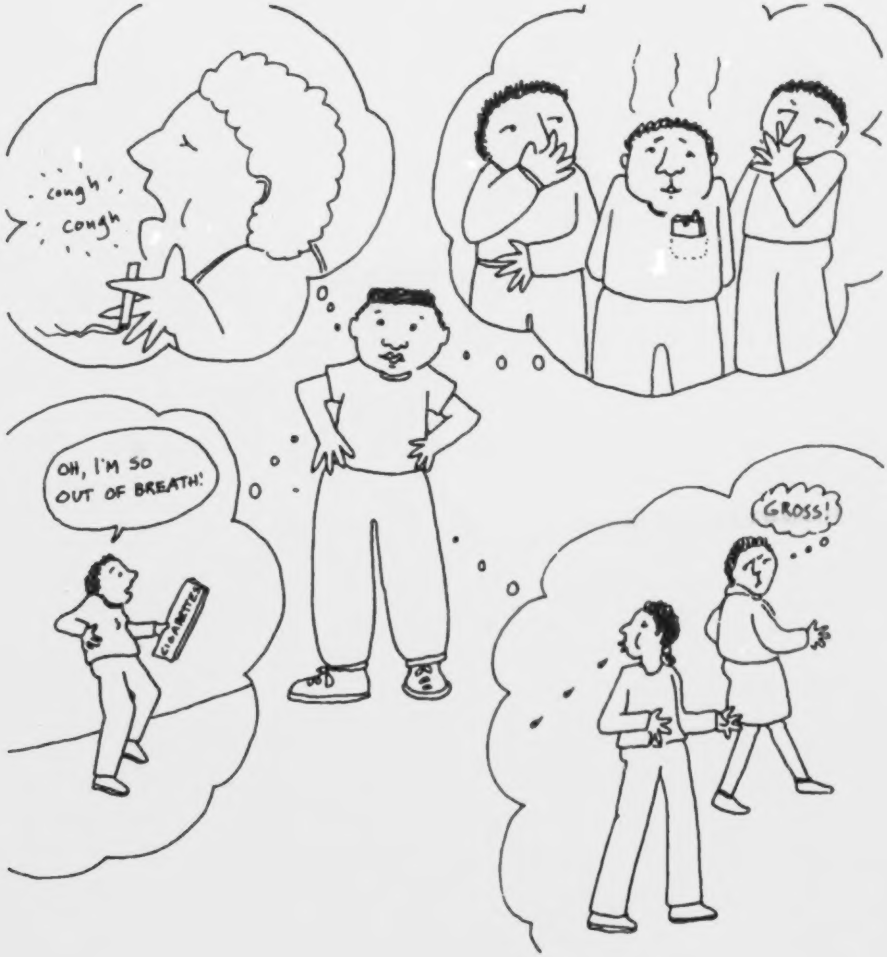
Don't be surprised if you find out later that reports of initial tobacco use were a hoax. Children sometimes pretend they've used tobacco to test the reactions of others.

Messages to Reinforce

- Tobacco is a drug.
- People who use tobacco become addicted to nicotine.
- Most people who use tobacco would like to quit.
- Children aren't responsible for tobacco use by others.
- Most people don't use tobacco. Children should never try it.

Chapter 6

What Do Smoking and Chewing Do to You?


cough
cough
OH, I'M SO OUT OF BREATH!
CIGARETTES
GROSS!

This chapter discusses what happens to people who use tobacco. Since young children have difficulty understanding the long-term health consequences of smoking and chewing, talk begins with what children can learn or already know from observing tobacco users. Material covered in earlier chapters is reinforced here in a different context. New information explains how people's physical appearance, popularity, image, and choices are all negatively affected by smoking and chewing.

A basic explanation of the respiratory and circulatory systems leads to discussing how cigarette smoking affects these systems. Children learn why smokers cough and why they don't do well in sports. They learn that using tobacco can make people very sick. The benefits of quitting are briefly discussed. Children are encouraged to appreciate their bodies and keep them tobacco free.

Goals of Communication

Use the material in this chapter to help children:

- Understand how smoking and chewing tobacco harm the body.
- Understand that most people don't smoke and chew, and don't like to be around people who do.
- Realize that smoking and chewing limit people's choices.
- Appreciate their healthy bodies and keep them tobacco free.

Starting the Talk

Children are likely to begin talk about this topic by asking a straightforward question, "What does using tobacco do to you?" Any one of several issues may prompt this inquiry.

Children who have aversive reactions to smoking and chewing may wonder how the practices that they find so repulsive affect the tobacco user. Those who've been told they shouldn't use tobacco might be trying to understand the reasons for the rule. Children who have heard that using tobacco is harmful might simply be seeking more information.

Children also might be testing the accuracy of information they've already received from you or other sources. Perhaps they suspect smoking and chewing aren't so bad as they've been led to believe. Some may be challenging warnings not to use tobacco.

Children may be worried about the effects of smoking and chewing on people they love. They may be curious or concerned because they themselves have experimented with smoking or chewing. These children may be seeking reassurance that nothing terrible is going to happen to them.

Try to find out the real purpose behind a child's inquiry. You might reply to the question with one of your own, such as "What makes you wonder about that?" or "Could you tell me a little bit more about what you want to know?"

Don't be surprised if children repeatedly ask about the effects of smoking and chewing. The issue may be different each time the question is raised. Remember, the effects of tobacco use are complicated. Children may need to discuss the same subject again and again in order to understand it.

You can begin conversations with children about the effects of smoking and chewing by commenting on tobacco use in the world around you. When you see a dirty ashtray, you might ask, "Do you wonder what happens when this gunk gets into a smoker's body?" If you see someone chewing tobacco, you could comment, "I bet that chewer has sores in his mouth" or "I'm worried about that fellow. I wonder if he knows what he's doing to himself when he chews tobacco."

Talk may come out of other conversations. If you and a child have been discussing how bad cigarette smoke smells, you might remark, "Smoking is bad in other ways too. Have you heard what it does to smokers?" If you've just told children they shouldn't smoke, you could ask, "Do you understand why we have this rule?"

If children show strong interest in this topic, introduce them to some of the materials listed in the resources section of this book. Perhaps talking has stimulated the curiosity of budding scientists!

What to Say

Using tobacco changes people in many ways. It changes them on the outside and on the inside. You probably already know some of the things that smoking and chewing do to people. Let's begin by talking about what you can learn about tobacco through your eyes, your nose and your ears.

Tobacco makes people look bad. Think about what you see when people smoke or chew.

Smokers suck very hard on a rolled up piece of tobacco. Then they blow smoke out of their mouths or their noses. How does this look to you?

Chewers keep a big wad of tobacco in their mouth. Sometimes you can see the lump in their cheek. They often spit brown tobacco juice. Does this make a person look good?

Some teenagers think they will look good if they smoke or chew tobacco. They think they will look cool and grown-up. These teenagers might fool themselves, but they don't fool other people. Most teenagers don't think that smokers and chewers look cool and grown-up at all. They think using tobacco looks dumb.

If people keep smoking and chewing, tobacco makes them look bad in other ways. Many smokers and chewers have brown stains on their teeth. Sometimes when chewers smile, you see pieces of brown tobacco stuck in between their teeth. Chewers sometimes have dark spots on their teeth, too, because chewing tobacco can wear away a tooth's white covering *(enamel).*

Chewing tobacco can make people's gums very red and sore, instead of pink and healthy. Their lips and gums might have raw sores and white patches on them. They might be wrinkled and cracked. Chewing tobacco can cause a person's gums to shrink so that you can see the roots of their teeth. Chewing tobacco can also make people lose their teeth, and these lost teeth won't grow back.

None of these things look good. And they don't feel good to the chewer, either.

People who smoke cigarettes get wrinkles around their eyes and mouths much faster than people who don't smoke. Smokers lose the rosy color in their cheeks. Their skin may get dry and yellowish from the tobacco. Smokers often have yellow or brown stains on their fingers and fingernails. Do you think these things look good?

Tobacco makes people smell bad. Most people don't like the way tobacco smoke smells. When people smoke cigarettes, their breath, hair and clothes can smell like tobacco smoke. The rooms where they smoke and their cars smell like tobacco smoke, too.

Tobacco makes people sound bad. Smoking can make people cough. Sometimes they make lots of short, dry coughs. Sometimes they make big, deep coughs to clear globs of phlegm and mucus out of their throats. Then you hear them spitting out these globs. Have you ever heard a smoker with a bad cough?

People who chew tobacco make sounds, too. They sound bad when they spit out the brown juice that chewing tobacco makes in their mouths. Chewing tobacco makes the mouth water all the time, so chewers spit a lot. If they swallow the brown tobacco juice instead of spitting it out, they can get a stomach ache.

Tobacco keeps people away. Many people want to stay away from smokers and chewers. They don't like being around tobacco smoke and spit.

Smoke from other people's cigarettes makes some people cough and get headaches. Smoke in the air can make people's eyes hurt too. Some people get very sick when they smell cigarette smoke. Others just don't like the smell or it bothers them.

These people try to stay away from smokers. If they are near them in a room, they move away. They might not invite smokers to ride in their cars or to come to their houses to visit. They may like these people very much. But they don't like to be around their cigarette smoke. People with friends who smoke might ask them not to smoke while they are together.

Many people stay away from tobacco chewers too. They don't like the chewing and spitting. They don't like the smell of tobacco on the chewers' breath.

Teenagers who don't smoke or chew usually choose friends who don't use tobacco. Most of them think smoking and chewing are dirty things to do. They like their friends to be tobacco free.

Teenagers who date usually want to date people who don't use tobacco. They don't like tobacco smoke and spit. They don't like kissing someone who smells like tobacco.

How do you feel about these things? Do you think smoking and chewing are dirty? Do you prefer friends who don't use tobacco? When you are old enough to go out on a date, do you want your date to be tobacco free? Do you try to stay away from people who are using tobacco?

Tobacco might mean fewer friends. Smokers and chewers sometimes lose choices about the close friends they will have. People who don't use tobacco can be friends with everyone. People who don't like being around cigarette smoke and chewing tobacco may choose not to be friends with smokers and chewers.

Everything tastes like tobacco. Smokers and chewers lose their sense of taste. Tobacco has such a strong taste, it's hard to taste other things. Everything tastes like tobacco! Smokers and chewers often eat foods with lots of spices and seasonings because they have trouble tasting other flavors.

Smokers can't smell very well. Smokers lose their sense of smell. They can't smell the soft, sweet smells from flowers and other good things. They don't always know when something smells bad. They don't know that they smell bad themselves because they smoke.

Tobacco tells you what to do. Smokers and chewers lose choices about the things they can do. The drug nicotine in tobacco makes them want to smoke and chew. The nicotine changes their bodies so that they need tobacco. They become addicted to the nicotine in tobacco.

People who are addicted to nicotine need tobacco to relax. They need tobacco to work. They need tobacco to have fun. They can't do any of these things without tobacco. This can make them feel bad about themselves.

If people are addicted to tobacco and they don't get enough of it, they start to feel very bad. They have trouble thinking about anything else. Their bodies need nicotine in a hurry. When this happens, smokers and chewers lose choices about what they do. The tobacco is telling them what to do.

Smokers and chewers must take tobacco with them everywhere they go. If they run out of cigarettes or chewing tobacco, they stop what they are doing to find more tobacco. When they are in places where smoking and chewing are not permitted, they get very uncomfortable. They must leave and find a place where they can smoke or chew.

On an airplane where smoking isn't permitted and where they can't leave, smokers have a problem. They need to have a cigarette right after the airplane lands. They need to smoke right away, before they get their suitcases or meet the friends they came to see.

Smokers and chewers aren't free. The nicotine in tobacco tells them to smoke or chew. Nicotine makes them stop doing things they like and use tobacco instead.

Tobacco costs money. Smokers and chewers lose choices about how they spend their money. Can you believe people spend money for something that hurts them? Because they are addicted to nicotine, smokers and chewers buy tobacco instead of other things they really want or need. Does this seem like a smart thing to do?

Smoking costs money in another way. It burns holes in things. Have you seen smokers with holes burned in their clothes? Sometimes they burn holes in the seats of their cars or the furniture in their houses. It costs a lot of money to fix these burned things or replace them.

Cigarette smoking does more than burn holes. Smokers who leave a burning cigarette and forget about it, or throw it away without being sure it's out, cause many fires.

About half of all fires in the United States are started by cigarette smoking. These fires often burn up people's homes. They burn up forests too. It costs money to put these fires out. It costs more money to build the houses again, and to plant new forests.

Even nonsmokers have to help pay for these things. Everybody pays taxes that the government uses to pay firemen, to plant new forests, and to help replace burned buildings. Do you think it's fair that cigarette smoking costs everybody money?

Tobacco hurts the body. Using tobacco hurts people in many other ways. Smoking can make people short of breath. Smoking and chewing can make people very sick. These things keep smokers and chewers from doing things that they like.

The nicotine in tobacco is a very bad drug. When people smoke or chew tobacco, the nicotine makes their bodies want more tobacco. At the same time, it is hurting the body in many ways. This is what makes nicotine such a strong and sneaky drug.

Some people think they can fool nicotine. People who smoke sometimes think they will be safe if they chew tobacco instead of smoking it. But all tobacco brings nicotine into the bodies of people who use it. Some kinds of chewing tobacco have even more nicotine than cigarettes.

Smokers sometimes think they will be safe if they smoke cigarettes that say "low tar" on the package. But their bodies want more nicotine. These people start to suck harder on their cigarettes. They start to smoke more often. People who smoke "low tar" cigarettes aren't safe at all. The nicotine hurts their bodies. The tar and carbon monoxide in cigarette smoke hurt their bodies too. No cigarette is safe to smoke.

Smoking cigarettes and chewing tobacco cause many bad things to happen inside the body. Tobacco keeps the body from doing the best job it can to keep you healthy. To understand what smoking and chewing do inside the body, you need to know something about how your body works.

YOUR BODY NEEDS FRESH, CLEAN AIR

Let's take a deep breath of fresh air. See how good that feels? Let's do it again. Your body needs fresh, clean air *(oxygen)* to help it work well. Let's follow the air you breathe and learn what happens to it after it gets inside your body.

When you breathe in, the fresh air begins its long trip through your body.

First, your mouth and nose make the air just the right temperature for your body. If the air is too dry, your mouth and nose add moisture to it. Tiny hairs in your nose catch any dust or dirt, so the air will be clean when it goes into your body.

Next the air goes into your throat and travels down through your windpipe *(trachea)*. Can you feel your windpipe here at the front of your throat? The windpipe ends in two tubes that branch out much like the branches of a tree turned upside down. These tubes *(the bronchial tubes)* have many smaller branches. Together the bronchial tubes and all their branches are called your *bronchial tree.*

While the air is in your windpipe and bronchial tubes, it gets cleaned again. A sticky cleaning liquid (*mucus*) catches any dust or dirt in the air you've breathed in. Then tiny hairs (*cilia*) sweep the mucus up and into your throat. This makes you cough or swallow so the dust and dirt don't get down into your lungs.

The fresh, clean air then travels into little air sacs *(alveoli)* at the ends of all the tubes in your bronchial tree. These air sacs look like bunches of tiny balloons. They stretch just like balloons to hold the fresh, clean air when you breathe in.

Your lungs are made up of your bronchial tubes, all the other smaller branches connected to them, and the many tiny air sacs at the ends of these branches. The lungs are a kind of travel center for the air and blood in your body. When you breathe in, fresh air travels from your nose and mouth, down your windpipe, through the tubes of the bronchial tree, and into all the tiny air sacs.

Blood travels through your body, too. It travels in many tubes called *blood vessels.* Each time the blood passes through the lungs, it picks up nice fresh air from the tiny air sacs. Then the air travels through the blood vessels to the rest of your body, where it works to keep your body healthy.

After your body uses the fresh air, it travels in the blood back through the blood vessels to the air sacs in the lungs. When you breathe out, the air sacs push the used air *(carbon dioxide)* out of your body, just like balloons when you let the air out of them.

All these things happen inside your body every time you take a breath!

Put your hand in front of your nose. Now breathe in and then breathe out. When you breathe out, can you feel the used air coming out of your nose? Now blow air out of your mouth onto your hand. Your body has used this air too. Has your body made the used air warm?

Can you feel your breastbone in the middle of your chest? Now put your two hands on the two sides of your breastbone.

Your lungs are right here, inside your chest. Everybody has two lungs, one on each side of the breastbone.

What do you feel? Your chest goes up and down each time you take a breath. Your bronchial tree is cleaning out the air you've breathed. Your air sacs are taking in the clean air and sending out the used air. Fresh air is traveling in your blood to all parts of your body, helping you feel healthy and good. Your body is an amazing and wonderful machine!

What do you think happens to the air of people who smoke cigarettes? Let's talk about it.

First, smokers don't breathe the fresh, clean air they need to be healthy. They breathe hot, dirty, smoky air full of tar, nicotine and poison gases. Each of these things works in a different way to keep the smoker's body from getting all of the good air that it needs.

Tobacco tar gets into the tiny hairs in the bronchial tree and makes them stiff and sticky. When this happens, the hairs can't sweep the mucus up and into the throat, so the mucus gets stuck in the windpipe.

When smokers don't smoke for awhile, the cilia start working again, cleaning the air and sweeping the mucus into the throat. This is why smokers often cough in the morning. The hairs have been busy all night, sweeping and cleaning while the smoker slept and didn't smoke. In the morning, the smoker has a lot of mucus in the throat and has to cough to get it out.

But every time the smoker has a cigarette, the tiny hairs stop sweeping. Then dirty, dusty air with tar in it gets into the smoker's lungs. The tar sticks to the tiny air sacs. The air sacs can't fill up with fresh air. They can't push out the used air. The sticky tar stays on the air sacs in the lungs for a very long time. Every time a smoker smokes, more tar gets on the air sacs. Soon the lungs change color. They turn from bright pink to black.

Tobacco tar does something else. It hardens around the air sacs so they don't stretch well anymore. When the smoker breathes, the hard air sac can't stretch like a balloon and so the air sac breaks. Smokers who have many broken air sacs have trouble breathing. They can't get enough fresh air into their bodies.

Here's another way cigarettes keep smokers from getting enough fresh air. A burning cigarette makes a poison gas called *carbon monoxide*. When smokers breathe, carbon monoxide gets into their lungs. It goes into the air sacs and gets into the blood, taking up the place of the fresh, clean air. Then the smoker's blood doesn't have enough fresh, clean air to carry to all the body parts that need it.

There is another way cigarettes keep smokers from getting all the good air they need. The nicotine in tobacco makes the blood vessels smaller. Not as much blood can travel through the body, carrying the fresh, clean air it needs to stay healthy.

Think about the ways that tar, carbon monoxide and nicotine in cigarette smoke keep smokers from getting all the fresh air they need. Tar makes the air sacs hard so they can't hold as much air as they need to hold. Poison carbon monoxide takes the place of fresh air in the blood and cuts down on the amount of air the blood can carry to the body. And nicotine makes the blood vessels smaller so they can't take enough blood and clean air to all parts of the body.

These changes happen in the body every time a person puffs on a cigarette. One thing that happens right away is that the smoker's fingers become colder. Smokers often have cold fingers and toes. Not enough blood with good air reaches them to keep them warm.

Since chewing tobacco isn't smoked, tar doesn't get into the lungs of people who chew tobacco. Carbon monoxide doesn't get into a chewer's body either. But chewing tobacco has nicotine in it. The nicotine in chewing tobacco narrows the tubes that carry blood and air through the body. This keeps the bodies of chewers from getting all the good air that they need.

The Heart Pumps Blood Through the Body

Do you know where your heart is? That's right. It's on the left side of your chest, near one of your lungs. Now put your hand over your heart, like this. Do you feel it beating?

Your heart is a very important muscle. It has a special job. It pushes blood through the body. It does this by tightening up and then relaxing. When it tightens up, the heart pushes blood carrying fresh air out into the body. It pushes blood carrying used air back to the lungs. When the heart relaxes, more blood flows into it to be ready for the next push. Each time the heart pushes blood, it makes a sound. This is the sound we call a heart beat.

When you run fast or do other kinds of exercise, your heart beats faster. It is pumping blood very fast so your body can get the extra air it needs when you run and jump. Exercise keeps your blood vessels nice and wide so that blood travels through them easily. When you stop exercising, your heart quickly slows down to its normal beat and rests. Your body might be tired, but it feels good. Exercise makes your heart healthy.

The nicotine in cigarette smoke and chewing tobacco makes the heart beat faster too, but not in a good healthy way. The heart beats faster because nicotine makes the blood vessels smaller than they should be. The heart works extra hard trying to push enough blood through the narrow blood vessels.

Since nicotine stays in the body, the heart doesn't get a chance to slow down and rest. It keeps beating fast. Smoking just one cigarette makes the heart beat at least five times more every minute. Sometimes smoking just one cigarette makes the heart beat even more—up to 24 times more every minute! When the heart works this hard, the lungs have to worker harder too. Smoking and chewing make it difficult for the heart and lungs to do their jobs.

TOBACCO HURTS ATHLETES

Because smokers don't get enough good air, they don't do well in sports. Athletes need a lot of good air, because their bodies work hard. They breathe fast to get extra air when they run, jump, swim, and do other kinds of exercise.

People who smoke can't get all the air their bodies need to do these things well. The tar, carbon monoxide, and nicotine in tobacco smoke don't let enough good air get to the athlete's muscles. Because nicotine makes the heart work hard all the time, smokers' and chewers' hearts have trouble pumping blood even faster when they exercise. Their hearts can't pump extra fast for very long. Smokers and chewers who try to do sports get tired very quickly.

People need steady hands to be good in many sports. But cigarette smoking makes people's hands shaky. Smoking even one cigarette makes tiny muscles tighten up. This makes it hard for smokers to keep their hands steady.

Many coaches won't let smokers play on sports teams. If team members smoke, they are kicked off the team.

Many coaches also have rules against chewing tobacco. But some baseball players and even some coaches chew tobacco. If you see this, watch to see if the players and coaches who chew tobacco are good runners. Usually the baseball players who run the very fastest don't chew tobacco. (Remember when you see players chewing, they are not always chewing tobacco. Some baseball players like bubble gum and sunflower seeds!)

TOBACCO MAKES PEOPLE SICK

People who smoke cigarettes get a lot of colds. Remember that the tar in tobacco smoke keeps the little hairs in the branches of the windpipe from cleaning the air that smokers breathe. Germs from dirty air get stuck in mucus and stay in the windpipe. They grow there and make people sick. Because smokers have trouble getting rid of germs, they keep colds longer than people who don't smoke.

Many smokers have trouble breathing. They run out of breath when they climb stairs or walk up a hill. If their breathing problem gets very bad, just getting up out of a chair and walking across a room can make smokers short of breath. People like this are very sick. Smoking tobacco has hurt their bodies so much that they are sick all the time.

Because cigarette smoking makes the heart work harder, smokers often have heart trouble when they get older.

Heat from the cigarette smoke and all the poisons in it hurt the body too.

There are many different poisons in cigarette smoke. So smoking can make people sick in many different ways.

The body tries to keep working well even when the poison from tobacco gets inside. Because their bodies seem to be fine, smokers and chewers may not always know how much tobacco is hurting them inside. When they find out, it may be too late to fix the body. Then people are very, very sick.

Cigarette smoking hurts the body in so many ways that smokers may not live as long as other people. Scientists say that smoking one cigarette shortens a person's life by 5–1/2 minutes. People who smoke a lot of cigarettes shorten their lives a lot.

People who chew tobacco hurt their bodies too. Chewing tobacco can also make people very sick and shorten their lives.

Not using tobacco is a smart choice. People who know all the ways that smoking and chewing hurt the body don't use tobacco. These people are smart. They like to have many choices. They don't want tobacco telling them what to do.

Long before you were born, people didn't know that smoking and chewing hurt the body. Lots of people used tobacco. As scientists began to learn about the bad things smoking does to the body, people were very surprised.

Many smokers stopped using tobacco right away. Some of them had a very hard time stopping because they were addicted to nicotine. But many of them kept trying until they were tobacco free. These people are very happy they quit smoking. They never want to smoke another cigarette.

It took scientists more time to find out that chewing tobacco hurts the body too. Scientists are still learning about this. But they already know that chewing tobacco hurts the body in many ways. Some people still don't know what the scientists have learned. They think that chewing tobacco is safe, but they are wrong. Chewing tobacco hurts people.

Today most people know that smoking and chewing tobacco hurt the body. Most people don't smoke cigarettes or chew tobacco. Doctors who know a lot about the body almost never smoke or chew.

But some people think tobacco can't hurt them because they're tough. Some boys and girls start to use tobacco because they're curious or because they think it's a grown-up thing to do. They think a few cigarettes can't hurt them. Or they think chewing tobacco is safe.

These people are wrong. Every puff of a cigarette and every chew of tobacco hurts the body. And the nicotine in tobacco sneaks up on people who smoke and chew. Nicotine makes them addicted to smoking and chewing.

Most people who are addicted to tobacco wish they had never started to use it. Most smokers and chewers would like to quit. Some of these people are working hard at stopping. They were not smart to start using tobacco, but they would be smart to quit.

When people quit using tobacco, their bodies work to clean out all the poisons. Nicotine puts up a fight. People who are trying to stop smoking and chewing often feel bad while they are getting rid of the nicotine that is in their bodies. They may feel bad for several days or even for several weeks. But as the body cleans the nicotine away, they start to feel better.

Because tar from cigarette smoke sticks in the lungs, it can take the body a long time to clean it out. How old are you? Think about how long you waited (are waiting) for your seventh birthday. Sometimes it can take the body seven years to clean tar from cigarette smoke out of a person's lungs.

If people who used to smoke and chew can stay away from tobacco long enough, their bodies will usually heal. Even when smoking and chewing have made people very sick, their bodies will feel better when they stop using tobacco.

Your body is special. Your body is a marvelous machine. All parts of it work together to keep you strong and healthy. And just like our bodies work for each of us, we need to work for our bodies too. We need to take good care of our bodies. We need to keep our bodies safe.

Our eyes and our noses and our ears help us take care of our bodies by giving us important information. Our noses tell us when air is not good to breathe. What does your nose tell you about cigarette smoke? When smoke smells bad to you, your nose is warning you to stay away from it. Your eyes and your ears tell you about tobacco too. They tell you that tobacco hurts the bodies of people who smoke and chew.

When your nose and ears and eyes warn you to stay away from tobacco, they are helping other parts of your body. Smoking and chewing tobacco hurt your lungs and your heart and the tubes that carry blood through your body. When you stay away from tobacco your heart and lungs and blood can do their jobs. They can work together to take good fresh air to all parts of your body.

When your body is healthy, you have lots of choices. You need to make good choices that will keep your body safe. One of the best choices you can make is to stay tobacco free. Will you help your body by doing that?

Give yourself a hug. Now stretch your arms way up high. Take a big breath of nice fresh air. Let it out slowly. Take another big breath. And breathe out slowly once more. Now let me see you smile. Do you feel good? You have made your body happy. Your heart and your lungs and your blood thank you. All your body parts thank you too. You are taking good care of your body.

Activities

—CELEBRATE FRESH AIR—

This activity can be done anywhere outdoors, but it might be especially fun in a park or on a grassy lawn. You will need at least one inflated balloon on a string for each child. Three balloons for each child would add to the fun.

"Let's give our lungs a treat. Let's treat them to some extra nice fresh air.

To show our lungs that we appreciate them, we'll each carry a balloon. We'll pretend that our balloons are air sacs in our lungs.

"Now let's all jump up and down. Does your balloon jump too? Try running in a big circle. Does your balloon follow you? Now run with your balloon over there and back again. Did your balloon fly along behind you?

"Let's sit down and give ourselves a rest. Did your pretend air sacs like exercising with you? I know your lungs and real air sacs did. You gave them some extra fresh air."

—BALLOON BLOW-OUT—

To demonstrate how the air sacs work, give each child a balloon that is not yet inflated. Be sure to use balloons that young children can easily blow up.

"The air sacs in our lungs are like many, many tiny balloons. Let's see how they work. Here is a balloon for each of you. Use your good, strong lungs to blow it up. When you have finished, hold it shut like this.

"Now slowly loosen your fingers around the mouth of the balloon and let the air come out. When your balloon is empty, blow it up again. Now let the air out again.

"The air sacs in your lungs do this each time you breathe in and then breathe out. Think how hard they work. Think how strong they are to fill and empty so often.

"What happened to your balloon when you blew it up and let the air out several times. Did it start to stretch? Did it break? When we are healthy, the air sacs in our lungs work better than these balloons. But people who smoke cigarettes hurt their air sacs.

"Cigarette smoke gets into the lungs and covers the air sacs with sticky tar. Then the tar gets hard. When this happens, the air sacs have trouble stretching. They can't hold as much fresh air as they used to. This is one very bad way that cigarette smoke hurts the body."

To demonstrate how much tar gets into the lungs of a smoker, you will need a bottle of dark molasses and a 1-cup glass measuring cup.

"People who smoke cigarettes get sticky dark tar in their lungs. If a smoker smoked one pack of cigarettes every day, how much tar do you think would get into the smoker's lungs in one year?

"Let's pretend this molasses is tar from cigarette smoke. I'm going to start pouring it into this cup. When you think the cup holds as much tar as would get into the lungs of a smoker in one year, tell me to stop pouring. (Stop pouring when the measuring cup is full.)

"Tar from cigarette smoke stays in the lungs of a smoker for a very long time. This tar makes the lungs turn from healthy pink to black. The tar covers the air sacs in the lungs and gets hard. Then the air sacs can't work well. They are just like balloons that are hard to blow up. Good fresh air has trouble getting into them."

Try this next step if children have easy access to a sink. Pour some of the molasses in a thin layer on a plate.

"This molasses will give us an idea of how tar from cigarette smoke coats the lungs. We are each going to coat two fingers with molasses. Touch the molasses with your pointer finger on the hand you use to write. Now rub the pointer finger on your other hand with your sticky finger.

"How do your two fingers look? Are they coated with something sticky? Do your fingers turn a yellow-brown color? This is what happens to the lungs of smokers, but their lungs look even darker. They are covered with tobacco tar.

"We are lucky. Molasses will wash off with soap and water. You can wash your fingers now. But smokers aren't so lucky. When tobacco tar gets into the lungs of a smoker, it won't wash away."

Use this activity to show how how air travels in the body. You will need a toy truck or train that can carry small marbles. You will need several marbles in each of three colors: red, blue, yellow.

Map out a large body on the floor by designating various locations around the room as body parts of a giant person. If you prefer, you can draw the outline of a body on butcher paper.

If you are working with a group of children, ask one child to kneel at each of the designated body parts. Give each child several blue marbles. Select another child to roll the truck around. The child with the truck is the blood.

"Let's pretend we're parts of the body of a giant person. What shall we name this giant person? Let's call him Goliath. Who is Goliath's head? Who is his foot? Who is his stomach? Now we need someone to be Goliath's blood. Who will do that?

"Blood's job is to deliver fresh air to all the body parts, and then to pick up air that the body has used. We'll use red marbles for the fresh air and blue marbles for the used air. The first time we play, I'll be the air sacs in Goliath's lungs. I'm going to give red marbles of fresh air to Goliath's blood. I'll put the red marbles in Blood's truck.

"Blood will drive the red marbles all around Goliath's body. Each time Blood comes to a body part, take a red marble of nice fresh air out of the truck. Put a blue marble of used air back in the truck. Then Blood will travel to the next body part. When Blood comes by, each body part should take one red marble of fresh air out of the truck and put a blue marble of used air back in the truck.

"After Blood visits all the body parts, Blood will bring the truckload of blue marbles back to me. Since I am the air sacs, I will trade all the used air (blue marbles) for more fresh air (red marbles). Then Blood will be ready to travel around the body again."

After the truck driver has made two or three trips around the body, put the yellow marbles down by the lungs and say:

"Oops, Goliath made a bad mistake. He smoked a cigarette. Now there is poison gas in his lungs. These yellow marbles are carbon monoxide from his cigarette smoke. The yellow marbles are going to get on Blood's truck. They are going to steal the place of the red (fresh air) marbles.

"What will happen this time when Blood travels around the body? How do your body parts feel when you don't get enough red marbles of fresh air? What will you do with your blue marble of used air? You will have to keep it, because there is no room to put your used air on Blood's truck. What will you do? Are you angry? What will you tell Goliath about cigarette smoking?"

—How Your Heart Beats—

Use this activity to explain the action of the heart.

"Make a fist out of your hand, like this. Your fist is about the size of your heart. When your fist grows bigger, you will know that your heart is growing bigger too. Your heart stays about the same size as your fist all through your life.

"Now open your fist just a little and then shut it tight again. Your heart is like your fist because it opens and shuts to pump blood through your body. When the heart relaxes, blood moves into it. When it shuts tight again, the blood is pumped out. The next time you are taking a bath or swimming, try opening and shutting your fist under water. Try to pump the water out fast.

"Each time the heart relaxes and tightens, it beats. Try opening and shutting your fist in a rhythm. Try doing this five times. Is your fist tired? Can you open and shut your fist ten times? How does your fist feel now?

"Your heart beats about 80 times each minute. When you exercise, it beats faster. When you rest, it slows down again. Exercise keeps your heart healthy. When people smoke and chew tobacco, their hearts beat faster too. But the nicotine in tobacco hurts the heart. Nicotine makes it harder for the heart to do its job.

"Your heart works very hard. It keeps beating, all day and all night. What if your fist had to keep opening and closing like that? We should take very good care of our hearts. What are two good ways to do that? You're right. We should exercise to keep our hearts healthy. And we should never smoke or chew tobacco."

—Smoking Costs Money—

Develop skills in arithmetic by calculating how much smokers spend. If you are working with children who can do more advanced problems, adjust the cost of a package of cigarettes in this example to an odd number, such as $1.79 or $2.13.

"Smokers often don't think about how much money they spend on cigarettes. Let's help two smokers find out.

"Eddie smokes five packs of cigarettes every week. One pack of cigarettes costs $2.00. How much does Eddie spend on cigarettes every week? Eddie wants to go to a movie, but a ticket costs $5.00. How many movies could Eddie see if he didn't spend his money on cigarettes?

"Maxine smokes four packs of cigarettes every week. She buys her cigarettes at a store that charges $2.10 for a pack. How much does Maxine spend on cigarettes every week? If Maxine saves her money instead of buying cigarettes, how much money will Maxine save in a month? What can she buy instead of cigarettes?

—Speaking Out Against Tobacco—

Invite a speaker or borrow materials from a community agency to help children learn more about the health effects of tobacco use. Check the resources section of this book for ideas. Be sure to select a speaker or materials appropriate for children under age ten.

Special Issues

Difficult concepts. The effects of tobacco use on the body are numerous and complex. The extent to which children can understand them depends on their knowledge of body systems and how the body works. The talk in this chapter presumes little or no such knowledge.

Although the suggested talk is simple, the content is rich with ideas. Be sure young children understand each new concept before you go on. Decide how much of this content you will discuss with very young children. They may not be able to understand much about the work of the heart, lungs, and blood until they are in the second or third grade.

Teaching about the body is done better through systematic instruction than through casual conversation. However, by answering children's questions as they arise, and by initiating discussion yourself at opportune times, you can develop their knowledge and interest. Informal talk can prepare the way for structured lessons and reinforce planned teaching.

In the lower elementary grades, health instruction usually concentrates on helping children develop an appreciation for their bodies. Children in grades K-3 learn the names of visible body parts and a little about how these parts work. These children can be introduced to basic information about the heart and lungs and how cigarette smoke affects the way these organs work. Some excellent materials developed for this purpose are listed in the resources section of this book.

The resources section also identifies materials to help children in the upper elementary grades learn about the health effects of smoking. These may be appropriate for children who are approaching their tenth birthday; however, they may be too advanced for other youngsters. Be sure to review materials before using them.

Concepts to avoid. Chronic disease and premature death are the most serious effects of smoking and chewing. But talking about these subjects with young children is especially difficult. Youngsters don't easily understand that behavior can cause disease and that some diseases cannot be cured.

The subject of death has long been taboo in American society. Families differ about whether to discuss it with children, as well as in what to say about it. So children's understanding and beliefs about death may vary greatly.

According to Piaget (1983), the ability to think abstractly doesn't begin to develop until around age 11 or 12. So children under the age of ten are unlikely to understand that using tobacco while they are young increases their risk of poor health and premature death in twenty or thirty years. This cause-and-effect relationship is abstract and especially difficult for children to understand because events are separated by a great deal of time.

"Risk" is another abstraction, based on understanding of mathematical probabilities. Risk is hard to explain, even to adults. Children can easily misinterpret explanations.

For example, since young children think in concrete terms, they may believe very literally that smoking just a few cigarettes will cause lung cancer or a heart attack. As they realize that smokers don't die immediately after smoking and that many of them don't get cancer or heart disease, they may discount the risks involved in smoking. Such thinking works against your prevention efforts.

The terms "health", "illness", and "death" are also abstractions. They have little meaning to youngsters before the age of five. By the time they enter kindergarten, youngsters understand health as a state of energy and strength. Between six and nine years, they may express some worry about personal health. Children in this age range also sometimes think about becoming sick.

Most young boys and girls know they do some things that are "bad for your health." But if they get sick, they don't connect it with their behavior. They also expect illness to be brief. Since most childhood illness is caused by short-term infections, children's experience reinforces these perceptions.

Warning young children that smoking increases their chances of developing heart disease, cancer, and other chronic diseases therefore is likely to be ineffective. While children might accept the notion that these things happen to older people, they have trouble accepting the possibility that they personally could ever become so ill. The idea that their own behavior could cause disease may be beyond imagination. Children also have difficulty understanding that a disease may be irreversible or that death is final.

If children live with tobacco users. Learning about the effects of tobacco raises many questions for children with parents or other loved ones who smoke or chew. These children want to find out whether family members have been affected by tobacco use in the ways described to them.

Children will gather other information by asking questions and by observing. If a parent smokes, they will listen to see if the parent coughs in the morning. The parent's face will be inspected for wrinkles. The whiteness of the parent's teeth will be checked. Fingers will be examined for stains. Children will watch what happens to social relationships when the parent smokes or chews. They will question the smoker, based on what they're learning in school.

These children are monitoring the well-being of loved ones and testing the accuracy of statements they're hearing. They're collecting their own facts. If they find little supporting evidence from members of their own families, they may discount both the statements you make and your credibility.

If evidence is mixed or inconclusive, children may reserve judgment until they collect more information. When the results of children's independent fact-finding confirm what they've heard, they may become anxious about their family members who use tobacco.

These children may begin asking questions or challenging tobacco use at home: "Do you think you cough when you get up in the morning because you smoke cigarettes?" Or, "You wouldn't cough so much if you stopped smoking."

Once children decide that tobacco use has negative consequences and that family members know this, they may repeat two familiar questions with new urgency: "Why do you smoke (or chew)?" and "Why won't you quit?"

These questions now include an additional phrase, whether or not it is spoken. Children want to know why family members use tobacco when they know they're hurting themselves.

The ways that these questions are handled can have profound implications for the quality of family relationships and for children's views of family members. Children are quick to recognize that decisions and behaviors that affect some members of the family can also affect the entire family group. Thus, if parents continue to buy tobacco when the family is short of money, children may question their parents' judgment.

If parents persist in smoking around children who are bothered by cigarette smoke, children may become angry. They may conclude that their parents act unfairly in dealing with family problems. They also may decide that their parents are weak and lacking in self-control.

As children learn more about the long-term health consequences of tobacco use, they may worry that members of their family who use tobacco will become ill or die prematurely. This leads to other worries about who will care for them in the future.

Two fundamental questions are behind these inquiries: "Do you care more about tobacco than about me?" and "Don't you value life?" Failure to discuss issues that children raise about the effects of tobacco use thus can leave deeper family issues unresolved. This can also happen if discussion doesn't address the concerns behind children's questions about the health, social, and economic consequences of tobacco use by family members.

Be aware that your conversations about the effects of tobacco may bring up difficult issues for children with family members who smoke and chew. Be alert to children's questions that signal possible family problems. If you are talking with children in a group, try to strike a balance between providing accurate information and avoiding undue arousal of children's fears. You may want to talk with some children individually at a later time.

When you are talking with just one child, you may know whether family members use tobacco. If you don't have this information, don't put the child on the spot by asking about it directly. Do provide opportunities for the child to tell you. You might say, "You seem to be thinking very hard about this. Would you like to tell me what you're thinking?"

When you know there's a smoker or chewer in the child's family, your relationship with the child and with the family will help you to determine how you should proceed. If you know the family, you may be able to suggest ways in which the child can express his or her concerns at home. You may be able to discuss the child's concerns with a parent or another family member.

If you don't know the family, try to identify a relative or friend with whom the child could discuss his or her worries. You may choose to arrange a meeting with the child's parents or with another adult who cares about the child.

If children know someone with a tobacco-related disease. Some children may have a relative, neighbor, or family friend with a chronic illness caused by smoking or chewing tobacco. Some may have experienced the tobacco-related death of a friend or family member. Since one of every six deaths in the United States is caused by a disease related to cigarette smoking, this situation can be expected to arise sooner or later.

These children may want to talk about the long-term health consequences of tobacco use in a highly personal manner. They may introduce the topics of chronic disease and death as you talk.

If this happens in a group situation, acknowledge that smoking can cause serious illness (and death). Express regret that this has happened to someone important in the child's life. Then try to turn the talk back to prevention. You might say, "I'm very sorry to hear about your Grandpa. He probably started smoking cigarettes before people knew that smoking can hurt people. I'm glad we're talking now so that you will know more about tobacco than your Grandpa did when he started to smoke."

These children need understanding, individual attention, time, and support. If other adults in such a child's life are meeting these needs, it may be enough for you to express sympathy for the child's situation. If children look to you for help in understanding and dealing with chronic disease and death, you may need some help and support yourself.

Ask (other) adults in the child's family how you can be helpful. Consult a psychologist, clinical social worker, or member of the clergy. Consider referring the child's family to one of these resources. You can also find useful guidance in books. For example, Eda LeShan's book, *Learning to Say Good-by,* (1986) provides advice for discussing death with children.

If you smoke or chew. As children learn more about the effects of smoking and chewing, they will need to understand why you use tobacco. Their questions will be directed not only at learning more about tobacco, but also at learning more about you as a person. Try to be honest in your answers and be prepared for continuing questions.

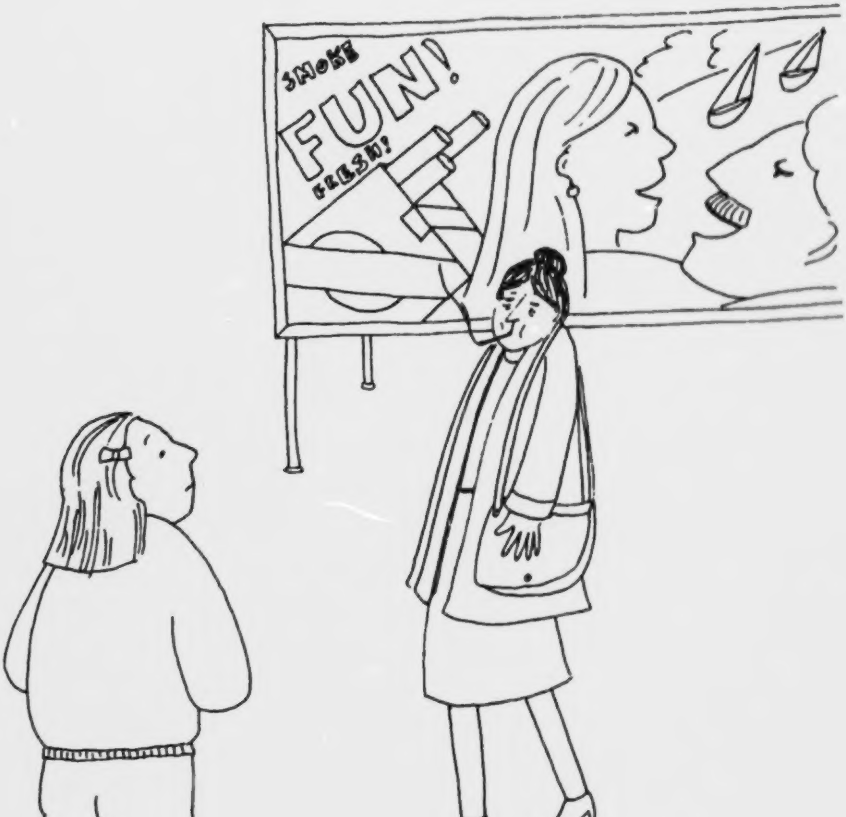
To help you anticipate children's questions and plan your responses, review the section for smokers and chewers in the introduction (page 10). Also review the section in this chapter entitled *If Children Live with Tobacco Users* (page 117). Even if you are talking about tobacco with children who don't live with you, similar issues are likely to arise if you are important to them.

Messages to Reinforce

- Tobacco harms the body in many ways.
- People who use tobacco give up choices and pleasures.
- People who take good care of their bodies don't use tobacco.

Chapter 7

It Looks Like Fun in Pictures


SMOKE
FUN!
FRESH!

This chapter helps young children to understand that advertising promotes cigarette smoking and tobacco chewing. Conversation begins by acquainting children with the concept of advertising—what it is, why it's used and basic principles that make it work. Children learn that ads try to tell people what to think about a product.

Children's questions about the fairness of promoting tobacco use are anticipated. Issues concerning truth in advertising are raised, and children learn they need to be cautious about advertising. They also learn about efforts to control the promotion of tobacco in the community.

The chapter—and the book—conclude by pointing out specific things children can do to help prevent cigarette smoking and tobacco chewing.

Goals of Communication

Material in this chapter can help children:

- Understand what advertising is and how it's used.
- Discover how ads can be misleading.
- Learn specific ways tobacco ads try to fool people.
- Learn how to be careful about ads.
- Become aware of community actions to control tobacco advertising and use.
- Learn ways they can contribute to tobacco use prevention.

Starting the Talk

A child's comment about an ad can begin this talk about advertising—what it is, why it's used, and how it's done. Or, you can start the discussion by calling children's attention to a brightly colored billboard, an ad on the back of a magazine, or a television commercial.

The following talk uses pictures as a starting point. Pictures are very concrete, yet they can take many forms, involve a variety of imagery, and appear in many places. They are easy to use and discuss in many dimensions and on different occasions.

Talking about pictures can provide a bridge to talking about television commercials, which quickly appear and disappear. Since picture ads are usually accompanied by written messages, talking about pictures also easily leads into a discussion of written advertisements.

Using magazines or newspapers as visual aids will increase the effectiveness of the following material.

What to Say

That *is* a pretty picture. What made you notice it? Did the bright colors catch your attention? Did you notice the picture because it's so big? Did you look at the picture because it's in a place where you often look? Do you like the people (or animals or other things) in the picture? What do you like about the picture? That picture is an *advertisement.*

What is an advertisement? An *advertisement* is a special way of telling people about things they can buy or do. That pretty picture you like is one kind of advertisement. Advertisements are often called "ads" for short.

Many ads use pictures, like this one does. Some use pictures and words together. And some ads use only words. You might hear these word ads on the radio or a loudspeaker. Or you might read them in a book, magazine or newspaper.

There are many different kinds of ads. Some of them don't look at all alike. But there is a way you can tell if a message you see or hear is an ad.

An ad tells you about something you can buy or do. What does this ad we're looking at want us to do?

MANY ADS TRY TO GET YOU TO BUY SOMETHING

Companies use ads to tell people about the things they make. They want people to buy these things. This is how the companies make money. Planning these ads and putting them in places where many people will see them is called *advertising*.

Have you seen pictures that advertise cars or soap or toothpaste? What other kinds of things have you seen advertised? How about soft drinks? How about candy? Hamburgers? Dog food? Have you seen ads for beer or cigarettes?

The companies that make all these things use ads to tell people about them. They want many people to buy them.

Ads can be used to sell many things. Have you ever seen pictures advertising a new movie? Have you seen pictures telling you that a circus or fair will be coming to town? Ads can tell you about ball games. Airline companies advertise so that people will fly on their airplanes when they take a trip. All these ads are trying to get people to buy tickets.

SOME ADS TRY TO GET YOU TO DO SOMETHING

Some ads tell you about things people are doing and ask you to help. They may want you to help by giving money. They may ask you to vote for someone. Or to volunteer some time. They may want you to help in other ways. Have you seen ads to save the whales or other animals? Have you seen ads asking you to adopt a homeless animal? To save energy or water? To recycle cans and papers? These ads are asking you to do something.

MOST ADS TRY TO GET YOUR ATTENTION

Some ads are for people who already know what they want. These ads are in the yellow pages of the telephone book or the "want ad" pages of the newspaper. Ads like this usually don't have pictures. They can be hard to read. People usually don't look at these ads unless they're hunting for information about something they want to buy.

Most ads try to get people to buy or do something they weren't planning to do anyway. So these ads must get your attention. The people who plan advertising get your attention in many different ways.

Advertising's everywhere! To get your attention, ads have to be in places where you can see or hear them. Let's think of some of the places we've seen ads.

HOMEMADE ADS

Sometimes people only need one or two signs to tell other people about the things they have to sell. People like this often make their own ads.

Grocery stores are a good place to see ads like this. Have you ever seen signs in grocery stores that say "fresh corn" or "new item." These signs tell you about something special you can buy in the store.

People often make signs to advertise something in their neighborhood. If they are going to have a yard sale, they make signs and put them up to tell people about the sale. Have you seen signs in your neighborhood that advertise a yard sale? A garage sale?

Have you ever had a lemonade stand? Did you put up a sign that said *Lemonade for Sale*? A sign like that is an advertisement. Did you make the sign yourself? How many signs did you make?

Sometimes one or two signs aren't enough. When people want many, many people to know about something they have to sell, they use other kinds of advertising.

MAIL ADVERTISING

Advertisements can go to people through the mail. These might be letters or leaflets or catalogs. They might be envelopes full of coupons that people can use to buy things. Sometimes a company sends a free sample in the mail. What kind of ads does your family receive in the mail?

NEWSPAPER ADS

Newspapers have two kinds of ads. There are want ads, for people who already know what they want to buy or do. Want ads usually use just words. Each ad is small. All the want ads are put on special pages of the newspaper. People who are looking for a car, a bicycle, a job, and many other kinds of things look in the want ads to find just what they want. Want ads advertise many different things.

Newspapers have another kind of advertisement. These ads try to interest people in buying or doing something they weren't thinking about. These ads are put all through the newspaper. Most of them have pictures. Some of them are so big they fill a whole page of the paper. This kind of ad tries to get people's attention.

People who want to sell things pay the newspaper money for the space that their advertisements use. This is a very important way for newspapers to earn money so that they can stay in business.

MAGAZINE ADS

Most magazines have lots of ads. Many of these ads show very pretty pictures. Magazine ads are usually in color. People like to look at pretty pictures with bright colors. Pictures like this help get your attention.

BILLBOARD ADS

Another way to get people's attention is to make a very big ad. An ad can be so big that it covers a whole wall. Many ads are put on big billboards that people can see as they drive on the road. Billboards are so big that people see them whether they are looking for them or not.

Very big ads can be found in other outdoor places. Have you seen ads on the walls of a sports stadium? Have you seen them on scoreboards? How about at rodeos or fairs? Think about places that you like to go. Have you seen advertisements there? What did these advertisements want you to buy? What did they want you to do?

ADS IN STORES

Companies that want people to buy things often put ads in places where these things are sold. The next time you go to the grocery store or drug store, see how many ads you can find. These can be bright posters. Sometimes they are fancy cardboard cutouts. Sometimes they are special boxes that show the things being sold in a clever way.

RADIO ADS

Radio is another good way to tell people about things they can buy or do. People hear radio ads while they drive their cars and go running with headphones. People listen to radios in many places. Have you heard ads on the radio, telling you about things you can buy or do?

ADS ON TV

TV is one of the best ways to let people know about things to buy or do. Thousands of people can see the ad at one time. Many companies advertise on TV. TV ads are called *commercials.* Commercials use cartoons or real people to tell you about the things you can buy or do.

Almost every television show has many commercials. When the show is going to stop for a commercial, you will sometimes hear the announcer say, "We'll be right back after this message from our sponsor." A *sponsor* is a company that pays the television station to show its advertisements. The company hopes that people who watch TV will buy the things that it makes and advertises.

What have you seen advertised on TV? Have you seen a commercial telling you about a special kind of cereal that's delicious and fun to eat? Have you seen a commercial telling about a new kind of toy? The companies that pay for these commercials want you to buy their cereal. They want you to buy their toys. They want you to ask your parents for these things when you go to the store.

ADS IN OTHER PLACES

Advertisements are put on many different kinds of things to get people's attention. They are on cereal boxes and milk cartons. They're often on matchbook covers. They can be on banners and flags. They can be painted on the sides of cars and buses. They can be signs on the tops of taxis.

Ads can be posters inside stores, buses and malls. They can be painted on cups and bottles and glasses. They can be on jackets, shirts and shoes. Have you seen an ad on a t-shirt or a hat? Did this ad tell you about something you could buy or do? What was being advertised?

Ads give people ideas. The people who plan ads know many ways to give you ideas about the thing they want you to buy or do. We just talked about one thing they do. They put ads in many different places to get your attention. Seeing the same ad in many places also can make you think that the thing being advertised is very popular. The people who plan advertising want you to think that many people like the things they are trying to sell. They want you to like these things too.

Ads often try to make you want to buy or do something by showing it in a picture with something else you like. This is called giving the thing they are trying to sell a good *image*. A good image makes people who see or hear the advertisement *imagine* that the thing for sale is very nice. Let's think about how this might work.

If a company wanted to sell blankets, it might try to give you the idea that the blankets are very soft. Would this be a good way to make you want the blanket?

To give you this idea, the company might put something soft in a picture with the blanket. Maybe the ad will show two soft little kittens curled up on the blanket. The soft kittens in the picture will give the blanket a soft image. When you see the kittens and the blanket together, you will probably think the blanket is soft too.

Now let's think of a picture that might be used to sell a car. The ad people probably wouldn't want you to think the car is soft and fluffy. They'd probably want you to think it is strong and fast. So they won't show a picture of the car with soft little kittens. They might show the car with a strong animal like a lion or a tiger. When you see the tiger and the car together, you'll probably think the car is strong and fast.

There are other things ads can do to make you think the car is strong. They might show a picture of the car going over a very rough road or passing other cars on the highway. They might show someone very strong driving the car or telling you how good the car is. All these things might make you think the car is very strong.

The people who plan ads work very hard to find out what image will make people want to buy or do the thing they are trying to sell. They talk with people and watch them to find out what they like. Then they put the things that people like in pictures with the thing they are trying to sell. These ads try to make people imagine that they would like to buy or do this thing.

Ads can fool people. Ads can help you by letting you know what kinds of things you can buy or do. But ads can also fool you.

Remember that ads try to get people to buy things. Ads always try to make these things seem very nice. But sometimes these things aren't nice at all. Sometimes ads don't tell the truth about the thing they want you to buy.

The blanket with the kittens in the picture might be soft—but it might be stiff and scratchy.

The car with the tiger in the picture might be strong and fast—but it might break down or go very slow.

Has advertising ever fooled you? Sometimes children see cereal advertised on TV. The ad makes them think the cereal is fun to eat and delicious. The toy inside the cereal box looks big.

Children who see the ad want the cereal very much. When they go to the grocery store, they ask their parents to buy it. When they bring the cereal home, they can't wait to open the box. They want a bowl of cereal right away. They want to get the special toy that is inside the box.

When the children taste the cereal they are disappointed. It isn't delicious. It doesn't hop out of the bowl or do other things that make it fun to eat. The toy inside the cereal box is tiny and cheap. Has this ever happened to you? Has advertising fooled you?

If you don't know better, ads can make you spend your money foolishly. They can make you think a bad thing is good. They can make you buy something you don't want or need.

Ads can make you buy things that don't work, or that break. Advertising can even make people buy things that hurt them.

Be careful of ads. The people who plan advertisements want to sell things. They want you to think these things are very nice. They might not care if these things are bad or good. They might not care about what happens to people who buy or do the things they advertise. Some people who plan advertisements only want to sell things. They want to help the companies that make things earn a lot of money. Then the people who plan advertisements will earn a lot of money too.

So people have to be careful about advertising. They need to know that ads try to get them to buy things. They need to know that ads give people ideas. And they need to know that ads don't always tell the truth about the thing they are trying to sell.

Here's what you can do about advertising. Look and listen to the ad—then stop and think. Remember that the ad wants you to buy something. The ad might be trying to fool you.

Ask yourself some questions. What do you already know about the thing the ad is trying to sell? Is this what the ad tells you? Is the ad telling the truth about the thing? Decide for yourself what things are good to buy and do. Don't let advertising fool you.

Now that we know something about ads, let's learn about a particular kind of ad. Let's learn about tobacco ads.

Tobacco tricks. The people who plan tobacco ads have a very hard job. They have to make people want to buy something that looks bad and smells bad. They have to make people want to buy something that most people don't like. They have to make people want to buy and use something that can hurt them.

The tobacco companies don't admit that tobacco hurts people because they want to sell it. They want to sell lots of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco so they will make a lot of money.

Since the tobacco companies are trying to sell something bad, they have to advertise a lot. Every year they spend billions of dollars advertising tobacco.

To get people to buy tobacco, ads have to make smoking and chewing seem like good things to do. Let's talk about some of the ways that tobacco ads try to fool you.

TOBACCO ADS ARE EVERYWHERE!

The tobacco companies put ads for cigarettes and chewing tobacco everywhere they can. Putting ads in many different places makes it seem like many people smoke and chew tobacco. This is one important way to fool people into buying and using tobacco.

Tobacco is advertised on billboards, signs at gas stations, and in other outdoor places.

Tobacco ads are on t-shirts and hats. Shopping bags have the names of cigarettes or smokeless tobacco on them.

Signs advertising tobacco are in grocery stores, drug stores, delicatessens and many other kinds of businesses.

Many tobacco advertisements also appear in magazines and newspapers.

If you go to a football or baseball game, or watch one on TV, you may see a sign advertising tobacco somewhere around the scoreboard. So every time you look at the scoreboard, you have to look at an ad for tobacco.

If you go to a car race, or watch one on TV, you may see tobacco ads on the sides of the racing cars. So every time one of these cars goes by, you have to watch a tobacco ad.

Tobacco ads are even on race cars and billboards in video games. Tobacco ads are on toy cars and model cars that children can build. Tobacco ads appear on some toy water guns.

Tobacco ads are in movies too. Did you see the movie *Superman*? Do you remember when Superman crashed through a giant *Marlboro* billboard? Marlboro paid to have their billboard in this movie.

Have you ever seen someone smoke a cigarette in a movie? Tobacco companies pay to have movie stars use their brand of cigarette.

Look for tobacco ads everywhere you go. You will find tobacco ads in some surprising places. Watch out for them everywhere. The tobacco companies spend lots of money for ads to be sure you see them. They want to get your attention. They want to make you think that smoking and chewing are popular.

ADS MAKE SMOKING AND CHEWING LOOK POPULAR

Most people don't smoke and chew and they don't like to be around people who do. Smoking and chewing are not popular, so advertising tries to change the way that people think. Advertising tries to give smoking and chewing a popular image.

You already know one trick the tobacco companies use. They put their ads everywhere. Here's another trick. They show popular people smoking a cigarette or chewing tobacco. Often they pay popular people to be in tobacco ads.

There is another way that ads try to make it seem like many people use tobacco and that others like to be around it.

Ads show pictures of groups of very popular people having fun together. Do you remember how the ad showing two soft kittens on a blanket makes people think the blanket is soft? In the same way, an ad that shows popular people smoking cigarettes together at a party tries to make cigarette smoking seem popular when it is not. These ads are trying to fool people.

ADS MAKE SMOKING AND CHEWING LOOK NICE

Blowing cigarette smoke out through the nose and mouth doesn't look good. A big wad of chewing tobacco puffing out someone's cheek doesn't look good either. So tobacco ads don't show people looking this way.

Tobacco ads only show very good-looking people smoking and chewing tobacco.

The women in cigarette ads have pretty smiles and very white teeth. They don't have wrinkles. They are young and thin. They wear nice clothes. The clothes never have holes burned in them.

The men in tobacco ads are good-looking too. Some of them look very strong and tough. Some of them look rich and handsome. None of them have brown stains on their teeth or yellow stains on their fingers.

Ads don't show how smokers and chewers really look and smell when they use tobacco. Ads that make smoking and chewing look nice are trying to fool people.

Cigarette ads don't show dirty ashes or ashtrays. Most people don't like cigarette smoke, so the ads don't show the smoke in pictures. If an ad shows someone holding a cigarette, no smoke will be coming out of it. Seeing a picture of cigarette smoke makes people think of how bad it smells.

Many tobacco ads don't show cigarettes or smokeless tobacco at all. Sometimes they only show the name of the cigarette or chewing tobacco. Sometimes they only show the pretty tobacco package. Sometimes the package is neatly opened and one or two nice, clean cigarettes are shown sticking out of the package.

Ads try to give tobacco a nice clean image. They try to change the way you think about tobacco.

ADS MAKE SMOKING AND CHEWING LOOK SAFE

Smoking and chewing tobacco hurts the people who use it. But ads make smoking and chewing look safe. Here are some of the ways ads make tobacco look safe.

Ads try to give people the idea that cigarettes that are low in tar and nicotine are safe. But no cigarette is safe. All cigarettes hurt the bodies of people who smoke them.

Ads try to make smoking seem safe by showing pictures of cool, clean, fresh air. One brand of cigarettes is even named Kool. Ads show people sailing in a brisk, fresh breeze. Ads show green grass and clear, blue skies. Words like *refreshing* are used in ads. But smokers breathe hot poison smoke into their bodies. Ads that make people think of clean, cool air are trying to fool people about smoking.

Ads show pictures of very healthy people. Ads show people running and jumping and playing sports. But people who smoke cigarettes can't do well at sports. Smoking and chewing tobacco can make healthy people sick. Tobacco ads that show healthy people are trying to fool you about smoking and chewing. They try to make you think that using tobacco is safe.

ADS MAKE SMOKERS AND CHEWERS LOOK TOUGH

Some ads show strong, tough men smoking cigarettes and chewing tobacco. One brand of cigarettes always uses a picture of a cowboy in their ads. This is so people who see the ads will think they will be strong and tough if they smoke this cigarette.

Ads that show these strong, tough cowboys are trying to give people the idea that smoking and chewing won't hurt strong, tough people like cowboys. This idea is wrong. Cigarette smoking has made many cowboys and other tough people very sick. The film *Death in the West* (Thames Television International, 1976) tells the stories of dying men who once posed as cowboys for Marlboro cigarette advertisements.

ADS MAKE SMOKERS AND CHEWERS LOOK BRAVE

Tobacco ads show men climbing steep mountains and flying hang-gliders over cliffs. These ads try to make people believe that if you are brave, you can do dangerous things without getting hurt. The pictures try to fool you into imagining that even though tobacco hurts most people, smoking and chewing won't hurt you. These ads are trying to fool people.

Tobacco ads use many different kinds of pictures to give people the idea that smokers and chewers can do anything they want. Some tobacco ads show cowboys who ride free in open country. Some ads try to make women think that they will be free and independent if they smoke. Some ads show people who are in charge of things at work. Some ads show people so rich that they never have to work at all. They just play.

These ads try to make people think that smokers and chewers can do whatever they choose. These ads are trying to fool you. People who smoke and chew become addicted to nicotine. And people who are addicted to nicotine lose choices about what they do.

ADS MAKE SMOKING AND CHEWING LOOK LIKE FUN

Tobacco ads show people having fun in many different ways. Pictures show people sailing, surfing, skiing, mountain-climbing, horseback riding and playing tennis. People in tobacco ads have nice dinners and visit nice places. They have fun with their friends.

Since cartoons are lots of fun, the people who make *Camel* cigarettes invented Joe Camel, a cartoon character, to be in their cigarette ads. Joe Camel fools people into thinking that smoking cigarettes is fun.

The tobacco companies do many other things to give smoking and chewing a fun image. One of the most important things they do is to advertise at all kinds of sports events, music festivals, and art shows. Often they help to pay for (*sponsor*) special contests, games and shows.

Tobacco ads are used at sports events, music festivals, art shows, special contests, games, and shows, where many people have fun. Free cigarettes and chewing tobacco are sometimes given to people at these events. This kind of advertising tries to fool people into thinking about fun and tobacco together.

People who are addicted to tobacco don't think smoking and chewing are fun. Most smokers and chewers would like to quit. Ads that make tobacco look like fun don't tell the truth.

Don't be tricked by tobacco ads. When you see an ad for cigarettes or smokeless tobacco, look at it very carefully. Stop and think. Remember that the ad was put in a place where you would be sure to see it. Remember that the ad tries to change the way you think. Remember that the ad tries to make you think smoking and chewing are good things to do.

How is the ad trying to fool you? Does it make smoking and chewing look popular? Does it to make smoking and chewing look safe? Does it make using tobacco look exciting? Are the people in the picture healthy? Are they having fun?

Remember what you know about tobacco. Then look carefully to be sure the tobacco ad doesn't fool you.

Changing tobacco ads. Many people want to change tobacco ads. They know that smokers and chewers get addicted to nicotine. They know that smoking and chewing hurts people's bodies. They know that tobacco ads try to fool people about these things. They want to stop tobacco ads that try to change how people think.

Some people think that the tobacco companies should be free to advertise and sell cigarettes and smokeless tobacco any way they can. Other people think the tobacco companies use their freedom to hurt people, and that some of their freedom should be taken away. Americans do not agree about what to do. They are still talking and arguing about it. They have been talking and arguing for a long time.

Here are some interesting stories.

TOBACCO ON TV

A long time ago, tobacco companies could advertise on radio and television. Then doctors started to find out that cigarette smoking could hurt people. Many people thought cigarettes shouldn't be advertised any more. They tried to make advertising cigarettes on radio and television against the law.

This did not work right away. The tobacco companies argued that in the United States they should be free to say anything that they wanted. They thought they should be free to advertise cigarettes on radio and television.

So the people who wanted to stop cigarette ads on radio and television tried something else. They said that they wanted to advertise too. They argued that just advertising cigarettes was not fair. They pointed out that the tobacco companies have a lot of money to spend on advertising. But people who know that smoking hurts people don't have much money. They thought they should have free time on radio and television to tell people that smoking would hurt them. The government agreed that this would be fair.

So for a while television and radio had two kinds of advertisements about smoking. Cigarette ads tried to make people think that smoking is good. Other ads told people that smoking would hurt them.

Many people who saw and heard both kinds of ads tried to stop smoking. Even though they were addicted to nicotine, they kept trying until they didn't smoke any more. Then they stopped buying cigarettes.

The tobacco companies did not like this. They wanted to stop the ads that said smoking is bad. So they said they would stop advertising cigarettes on radio and television if the ads that said smoking hurts people would also stop. A law against tobacco ads on TV was passed. Later, when the tobacco companies started to advertise smokeless tobacco, a law was passed to keep these ads off radio and television too. Now radio and television cannot broadcast any tobacco advertising.

This should end here, but it doesn't. The people who advertise tobacco thought very carefully. They realized that many people like to watch football, baseball and auto races on television. So they put their ads on scoreboards and on the walls of sports arenas. They painted their ads on racing cars. If a skiing or tennis competition was going to be on television, they helped to pay for this event and put up tobacco ads. They also put brand names of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco on clothes that athletes wear.

Now when you watch sports on television, you will see tobacco advertised in all these ways. The tobacco companies do not pay for television commercials. This would be against the law. But the tobacco companies found another way to make people think about cigarettes and smokeless tobacco when they watch TV. They see advertising when they watch sports shows. Putting tobacco together with sports gives smoking and chewing a very healthy, exciting image. The people who plan tobacco advertising like this very much.

Some people who know that smoking and chewing tobacco hurts people are very mad about this. They would like to make all tobacco ads against the law. Many people are still working hard to make this happen. This story isn't over yet.

WARNING PEOPLE ABOUT TOBACCO

Soon after doctors and other scientists found out that cigarette smoking hurts people, some people tried to pass a law that every pack of cigarettes and every cigarette ad had to warn people in writing that smoking will hurt them. The people who make money from selling cigarettes did not want their cigarette packages and ads to have a message saying that smoking was bad. There were lots of arguments about this. These arguments went on for years.

People argued about whether the warning message should be on ads or just on cigarette packages. They argued about what the warning message should say. They argued about how big the message should be and what kinds of letters it should have. They argued about where the message should be placed on cigarette packages and in ads. Each time that some people thought they had an agreement worked out, other people changed it.

Slowly things began to change. First a law was passed saying that every pack of cigarettes had to have a warning message. Then another law was passed to make this warning stronger. The government made a rule that cigarette ads had to include a warning message too.

But the tobacco companies did not obey the rule very well. They left the warning message off some ads. They made the warning message on billboards smaller than it was supposed to be. In some ads they did not put the warning message where it was supposed to go. After more arguing, the government made the rule very strong and clear.

Now each package of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco has to have a written warning message. Each ad for cigarettes and smokeless tobacco has to have a written warning message too. There are four warning messages about cigarettes and three warning messages about smokeless tobacco. The tobacco companies have to keep changing the warning message they use. This is supposed to make people notice the warnings.

Many people worry that the written warnings about tobacco don't catch enough attention. The warnings are very small. They don't attract as much attention as the pictures in tobacco ads. Some people hardly see them. The warnings on packages of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco are very small too. It can be easy for people to think that these warnings are not important. Other ways are needed to help people understand that smoking and chewing can hurt them.

HELPING PEOPLE LEARN ABOUT TOBACCO

For many years, people who understand that smoking and chewing tobacco hurts the body have tried to help others learn about this. They do many things like trying to keep tobacco ads off TV and putting warnings on tobacco packages.

People who know about tobacco help children to learn about it in school. They work to tell grown-ups about tobacco by giving speeches and special classes. They make posters and films and leaflets for people of all ages.

These people have had a hard time getting newspapers and magazines to write stories about how smoking and chewing hurt the body. Some newspapers and magazines are afraid that if they print these stories, the tobacco companies will stop buying advertisements. Then the newspapers and magazines would not have enough money to stay in business.

Now many people know about the bad things that smoking and chewing do to people. More and more people are learning all the time. But some people still don't listen. They are not interested in learning about the body. They don't want to hear that smoking and chewing can hurt them. These people think that lessons about tobacco are boring. They just want to have fun. They want to do exciting things. They are fooled by tobacco ads.

People who know the bad things that happen to smokers and chewers want to find new ways to help other people learn about this. They want children and teenagers to know about tobacco so they will never start to use it. They want to let grown-ups know too. Most grown-ups do not use tobacco and most never want to start, but some grown-ups already smoke and chew. These adults need to know that smoking and chewing tobacco hurts their bodies. They need to know that they should quit.

MAKING PEOPLE LAUGH AT TOBACCO

Some doctors and others are trying to help people learn about tobacco by making them laugh at tobacco ads.

When they first had this idea, Brooke Shields, a very pretty actress, agreed to help. So she posed for a poster with a cigarette coming out of her ear. This poster didn't make cigarette smoking look like fun. The picture made cigarette smoking look funny. People laughed at cigarette smoking when they saw this picture.

Many other people started to make funny posters about tobacco smoking and chewing. One of these posters shows a man with a cigarette stuck up his nose. The poster says, *I smoke for smell.*

One organization that makes many funny posters and stickers about tobacco is called *DOC.* Doctors and other people who belong to DOC also make fun of cigarette brands by calling them something a little bit different. For example, instead of saying *Marlboro,* members of DOC say *Barfboro.*

DOC members put funny ads about tobacco right next to billboards with ads from the tobacco companies. Sometimes doctors put on their white doctors coats and go to special events that the tobacco companies are sponsoring. When a tobacco company helps to pay for a sports event, DOC organizes another sports event just like it. They give this sports event a name that makes fun of the one that the tobacco company is sponsoring.

Working to be tobacco free. All through the United States, people are doing many things to keep people from using tobacco. Many people do these things because they do not like to be around cigarette smoking and chewing tobacco. They want the United States and other countries to be tobacco free.

People also try to keep people from using tobacco because they care about each other. They don't want smoking and chewing to hurt people. They want to keep themselves and others in their families and their communities safe and healthy.

These people help to pass laws that do not permit smoking and other kinds of tobacco use at school, at work, and in many other places. They work to put high taxes on tobacco so that it will cost more for people to buy cigarettes and smokeless tobacco. They work to keep tobacco from being sold in vending machines. They work to keep stores from selling tobacco to children. They work to keep the tobacco companies from giving away free samples of cigarettes and chewing tobacco. And they work to help smokers and chewers quit.

You can help. Would you like to help keep tobacco from hurting people? You can help in some very important ways.

What you know about tobacco. Today many people know the real facts about tobacco. And you are one of those people. There are many things you can do to tell your friends and others what you know about tobacco:

1. Keep yourself safe and tobacco free.
2. Don't buy candy, gum or other treats that look like tobacco. This will help keep tobacco use from looking popular.
3. If someone offers you a cigarette or some chewing tobacco, tell them "no thanks." Tell them you don't want to try tobacco.
4. If any of your friends try tobacco, tell them you have to go somewhere else. Tell them you'll see them later. Suggest that you get together someplace where tobacco isn't allowed. Suggest you do something that's fun and healthy.
5. Tell your friends what you know about tobacco. Tell them how it hurts people. Tell them you don't like it, and you hope that they won't use it.
6. If someone lights a cigarette or chews tobacco around you, politely ask them to stop. Tell them it bothers you. If they won't stop, move away.
7. When you see tobacco ads, look to see how they're trying to fool people about tobacco. Tell your friends and other people not to be fooled by tobacco ads.

Activities

Note: Several of the following activities use magazine advertisements for cigarettes and smokeless tobacco. Since these ads are selectively placed, you may not find many in the magazines you read, and the ones you find may not be youth-oriented. Try looking in magazines such as *Playboy, Cosmopolitan, Rolling Stone, Glamour, Road and Track, TV Guide, Working Woman, People, Motor Cyclist* and *Sports Illustrated.*

—In Ads I See...—

For this activity, you will need one tobacco advertisement for each child. Do not let children see these advertisements. Put one in front of each child, face down.

"I have put a tobacco ad in front of you, face down so you can't see it. When I give the signal, turn the ad right side up. Then tell me the first thing you see. Does everyone understand what we are going to do? Are you ready? Now, get set....Go!"

Ask children to take turns holding up their advertisements and telling what they saw first. After each child has spoken, say:

"What things in these ads catch your attention? Big things? Bright colors? Things in the middle of the page? Or do your eyes go straight to things you like?

"Now look for the warning message in the advertisement. Did you find this message? Is it big? Is it colored brightly? Is it in the center of the page? Is it an important part of the picture? Do you think the people who make tobacco ads want the warning message to catch our attention?"

If you want to discuss the content of the warning messages with children, four messages are developmentally appropriate to discuss with children to age 10. Two of these messages are on cigarette packages: *"Cigarette smoke contains carbon monoxide," "Quitting smoking now greatly reduces serious risks to your health."*

Two messages are on smokeless tobacco packages: *"This product may cause gum disease and tooth loss,"* and *"This product is not a safe alternative to cigarettes."*

The other three warning messages mention chronic diseases and complications of pregnancy that may be difficult for young children to understand.

—YOU BE THE JUDGE—

This activity uses tobacco ads from magazines. If you are working with a group of children, ask each child to bring an ad for tobacco from a magazine at home. Or allow each child to select an ad from an assortment you've collected. You also will need a bell and a toy horn that can be sounded by squeezing.

"Let's look at these tobacco ads and talk about what we see. You're going to judge whether your ad tells the truth about tobacco.

"Look at your ad carefully. If your picture has people in it, check to see if they look healthy. If they look healthy, the ad is not telling the truth, because smoking and chewing tobacco hurts people.

"Do the people in your ad look popular? If they look popular, your ad isn't telling the truth because most people don't like to be around smokers and chewers.

"Does the picture show clean air? If your ad shows clean air, it is not telling the truth. Cigarette smoke makes the air dirty and unpleasant.

"What else do you see in your ads? Do you have any questions about other things in the picture? Do the ads tell the truth about tobacco?

"Are you ready now for your turn to be the judge? Come up here one by one and hold your advertisement up so we all can see it. Ring the bell if the ad is telling the truth about tobacco. Toot the horn if your ad does *not* tell the truth. You be the judge. Then tell us your reasons for deciding whether the ad is telling the truth about tobacco.

"Now that everybody has had the chance to be a judge, let's talk about what we found out. Did most people ring the bell? Did most people toot the horn? Judges, do you think ads tell the truth about tobacco?"

—LET'S LAUGH—

This activity will work best when you are talking with up to five children. For a larger group, find several copies of the same ad to hand out so that all children can see.

Choose an ad that conveys a message about tobacco you wish to counteract. Have in mind both the ad's message and a message that contradicts it. Substitute your own messages for those used in the following example.

"Can everyone see this tobacco ad? Does the cowboy look strong? Does he look tough? Does he look like he knows what he's doing? This ad is trying to get people to buy cigarettes."

Laugh as you say the following:

"This ad makes me laugh. It is very funny. It tries to make people think that smoking is a strong and tough thing to do. It tries to make smokers look like they are in charge of things—the way cowboys are in charge of cows. But we know that people who smoke are addicted to nicotine. They aren't in charge of tobacco. Tobacco is in charge of them.

"This advertisement is very funny. It's trying to fool me. But I'm not fooled. I think this ad is very silly. Does it make you laugh too? Let me hear you giggle. Let me hear you laugh. Can you laugh louder? Looking at tobacco ads gives us lots of funny things to laugh about."

—WE AREN'T FOOLED—

Use this activity to develop children's skills in observation. This classic children's game can be played by looking for billboards and other promotions while driving, shopping or waiting for the ball game to begin.

"Let's play 'I spy' with tobacco advertisements. Who do you think will find the most? How many different kinds of advertising can you find?"

When a billboard or other form of tobacco promotion is spotted, ask:

"Why would a tobacco company put a billboard (or other form of promotion) here? Who will see it? Are the tobacco companies trying to get people to smoke (or chew)?

Do you think the tobacco company is trying to get *us* to use tobacco? That's pretty silly. We know what tobacco ads try to do. We aren't fooled!"

Repeat the last two lines in unison as a refrain every time you see a billboard or other tobacco advertisement.

—WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?—

Help children correct partial or untruthful messages in advertising. Have an assortment of magazines available.

"We know that using tobacco does bad things to people. It gives them bad breath. It puts yellow stains on their fingers and brown stains on their teeth. They get extra wrinkles. Tobacco ads don't show these things. Let's fix them.

"Find an ad for tobacco in one of these magazines. Find one that shows very attractive people smoking or chewing. Then fix the ad to make it more truthful. Draw some wrinkles around their mouths and eyes. Make some yellow stains on the people's fingers and some brown stains on their teeth.

"Does the ad have cigarette smoke or tobacco spit in it? If not, draw these things in so the ad will be more truthful. Fix the ads in any other way you'd like."

Display the "corrected" ads and discuss them. Be sure to laugh at them!

—PICTURE THIS!—

Develop children's abilities to express their own perceptions.

"Think about someone smoking or chewing tobacco. Think carefully about how people look when they use tobacco. Now draw a picture of a tobacco user."

After the pictures are completed, display them. Ask:

"Do you think the tobacco companies would want to use these pictures in their advertisements? Why not? What kinds of pictures do the tobacco companies use when they are trying to sell tobacco?"

Special Issues

Difficult concepts. Advertising is hard for young children to understand. They trust adults implicitly. They accept adult authority. They accept information as factual, and interpret messages literally. Broadcast and print media are highly credible sources of information to them.

In addition, children often idealize famous people, and the country as a whole. So they view as particularly credible ads that feature celebrities and popular national images such as the American cowboy. All this complicates the task of helping young children understand that advertising aims to influence their thinking, their desires and their behavior.

To understand advertising, children must learn that messages can differ in purpose. They must recognize that not all these messages tell the truth. And they must learn that not all messages have their best interests at heart.

Talking with children about these concepts is saddening. These ideas don't come naturally to children, and learning about them involves a loss of innocence.

But teaching children about advertising is as important for their protection as teaching them that fire can be both friend and enemy. Children need to learn how to be careful about advertising, just as in a different way they must learn to treat fire with great caution.

Misleading messages about tobacco blanket children's lives in numerous and often unexpected forms. As one anti-tobacco activist points out, all you need to find tobacco advertisements are "a map of where kids go and a calendar with their schedule." Other aspects of tobacco marketing assure that cigarettes and chewing tobacco are readily available to children. One brand of smokeless tobacco even provides step-by-step instructions for use.

Tobacco ads blend message, theme, color, and other elements to create deceptive images with high appeal to youth. Ads associate smoking and chewing with good looks and the good life. People who use tobacco are portrayed as popular, attractive, athletic, adventurous, independent, successful, rich and healthy. These images capture the hopes and visions that children cherish for their future. Smoking and chewing are promoted as ways to make these dreams come true.

The sophistication with which tobacco is promoted complicates the challenge of explaining tobacco advertising to young children. Yet unless they can be helped to understand how tobacco is marketed, they can readily conclude that cigarettes and smokeless tobacco aren't really very dangerous. Surely "The President" wouldn't permit tobacco to be so widely promoted if cigarettes and chewing tobacco were really harmful.

Continuing with this train of thought, children could conclude that you—and others who issue health warnings—are the ones who lack credibility. Teachers, parents, and other adults have long lists of Do's and Don'ts for children. Don't smoke and chew can easily be viewed as simply another item on the list.

Most Do's are unappealing (Eat green vegetables), boring (Go to bed early), or onerous (Pick up your room). On the other hand, the Don'ts seem to take away all the fun. Tobacco ads invite children to ignore admonitions. They provide exciting and welcome messages, delivered in much more inviting ways than all the Don'ts.

Frequent and lively conversations with children about advertising are essential in tobacco use prevention. Begin by helping children understand general concepts about advertising, and continue their education at every opportunity. Expect to be confronted with some very difficult questions. For example, children may ask why untruthful advertising is allowed. They may ask why authorities don't protect people from tobacco. They may want to know why tobacco is sold legally when other harmful drugs are not.

Such questions have no easy answers. They raise difficult dilemmas about the proper role of government in a society that values free speech and a free market. They draw upon knowledge of our history, our economy and our laws. They concern inconsistencies that are not readily explained.

When these issues arise, acknowledge they are difficult. Describe the nature of the problem in a sentence or two. If you can, pose a question that will make the child think more about it. Then return to the topic another time. By discussing the dilemmas that even adults find perplexing with children, you begin to prepare them to be concerned and informed citizens. Talking about tobacco advertising is clearly a long-term project that needs to continue well into adolescence.

Messages to Reinforce

- Tobacco ads try to change the way that people think about smoking and chewing.
- Tobacco ads aren't truthful.
- Tobacco ads try to get people to smoke and chew.
- People are doing many things to help others stay away from smoking and chewing.
- You should stay away from smoking and chewing.
- You can help prevent tobacco use.

References

Benedict, Ruth. 1934. *Patterns of culture.* New York: Houghton Mifflin.

Clausen, John. 1986. *The life course: A sociological perspective.* Foundations of Modern Sociology Series. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Coles, Robert. 1986. *The political life of children.* Boston: The Atlantic Monthly Press.

Elkind, David. 1981. *The hurried child: growing up too fast too soon.* Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley.

LeShan, Eda. 1986. *Learning to say good-by.* New York: Macmillan.

Louis Harris and Associates. 1988. *Health: You've got to be taught.* An Evaluation of Comprehensive Health Education in American Public Schools conducted for Metropolitan Life Foundation. New York: Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.

Piaget, J. 1983. Piaget's theory. In *Handbook of child psychology,* vol. 1, 4th ed., ed. P.H. Mussen. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Thames Television International. 1976. *Death in the west.* London: Thames Television International. Available from ETR Associates, Santa Cruz, CA.

Resources

To Enrich Your Talk About Tobacco With Children

Action on Smoking and Health (ASH)
2013 H Street NW
Washington, DC 20006
(202) 659-4310

ASH is a national, legal-action organization working for nonsmokers' rights. Upon request, ASH will send free of charge a copy of its newsletter *ASH Smoking* and *Health Review,* current information about national activities to control tobacco, and a list of resources with the names of contact persons. ASH also offers informational materials on 50 tobacco-related topics.

American Cancer Society (ACS)
1599 Clifton Road, NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30329
(404) 320-3333 (for referral to closest local ACS unit)
1-800-572-2227 (for information in response to specific questions)

The ACS is a national voluntary health organization with state and local affiliates devoted to controlling and eliminating cancer through research, education and service to cancer patients. ACS offers a variety of educational materials to help teach children and youth about tobacco and other cancer-related topics.

One special kit offered by ACS is *Starting Free: Good Air for Me,* a smoking prevention package for use with preschool children ages 3-5 in childcare centers, early childhood learning centers, kindergarten classes, and at home. The package includes a facilitator's guide, five story books with related activity sheets, three hand puppets, a poster, a coloring book, and special "smoke-free me" stickers for children.

ACS also offers two teaching kits for elementary schools designed to promote the development of positive health behavior. *An Early Start to Good Health* (K-3) includes four multi-media modules focusing on how the body works, the importance of feeling good about oneself, developing good health habits and making healthy choices. *Health Network* (grades 4-6) provides three units that help prepare young people for making decisions that affect their health.

Both kits include a teacher's guide with objectives, procedures and preparation requirements, as well as film strips, audiocassettes, duplicating masters for activity sheets and other resources. These materials are designed to either supplement a comprehensive school health program or to stand alone as an introduction to basic health concepts.

Another package is *Happy Mouth—Yes, Tobacco—No!* which provides single lessons about smokeless tobacco for grades K-1, 2-3, and 4-6. Each lesson contains objectives, purpose, lesson script and materials needed for either classroom or home activities. *Snuff Is BAD Stuff* is a more comprehensive curriculum for grades 4-6 aimed at preventing the use of smokeless tobacco. This program is designed to be used with two videos—*Don't Take the Risk,* and *Chewing Tobacco: The New Epidemic.*

A variety of other materials are also available. *Huff 'n Puff* is a story for children in grades K-3 about a wolf who, as a result of smoking, could not blow down the house of the three little pigs. *Healthy Decisions* is a computer software game for children in grades 4-6. This challenging adventure game helps young people understand the decision-making process. It comes with a user's guide, help cards, and a leader's guide for class and home activities. *The Huffless, Puffless Dragon* is an animated cartoon for grades 5-9 that introduces the anti-smoking subject in an energetic, enjoyable satire.

The ACS offers speakers, smoking cessation groups, and other materials on smoking and smokeless tobacco. Most print materials are available free of charge. Educational films are available on loan. Contact your local ACS unit for a catalog of materials or more information.

American Dental Association (ADA)
Division of Communications
211 East Chicago Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60611

The ADA is a voluntary association representing the dental profession. As part of its efforts to promote the public's health, the ADA offers a variety of educational materials on topics related to dental health. Those relevant to educating young children about tobacco include a film and brochure on smokeless tobacco, as well as a brochure on smoking and oral cancer. Requests for sample copies and further information should be made in writing. The ADA is not staffed to respond to telephone inquiries.

American Heart Association (AHA)
7320 Greenville Avenue
Dallas, Texas 75231
(214) 373-6300

The American Heart Association is a national voluntary health organization devoted to reducing death and disability from cardiovascular disease and stroke. Chapters are established in every State and in many local communities. Among its many services, the AHA offers a variety of educational materials on heart disease, stroke, nutrition, exercise and smoking.

To help educate young children about tobacco, the AHA has developed two instructional kits, one for grades 1-3 and one for grades 4-6, entitled *Getting to Know Your Heart*. The program for lower elementary grades explains how the heart works and helps children recognize that smoking may harm their health. The kit also includes a teacher's guide, two stethoscopes, a videotape, audiotapes, posters, charts, worksheets and student handouts.

In the videotape, *The Heart That Changed Color,* Tin Woodsman and the Scarecrow tell their friends about a perilous journey through the Land of Nicotine. While traveling through the dark and gloomy city of Smog, this daring duo meets the wicked Queen Nicoteena. Bullied, tormented, and threatened with arrest for their refusal to smoke, the Tin Woodsman and Scarecrow are rescued by a most unlikely lady.

The fairy tale has a happy ending as even Queen Nicoteena comes to realize that "smoke is no joke." Complementing the videotape are a *Smoke Is No Joke* song on audiotape, a lyric sheet and related puzzles and games. This kit also has a letter for children to send to their parents.

The upper elementary kit includes four modules: (1) How Your Heart Works; (2) Smoking and Your Body; (3) Food, Fun and Fitness; and (4) You're in Charge. The second module includes a self-test of smoking knowledge, a demonstration of the effects of tar found in tobacco, and a comic book about the effects of smoking on the lungs.

Adults who talk about tobacco with young children may also be interested in *Thanks for Not Smoking,* a poster featuring a dragon; *About Your Heart and Smoking,* a booklet with information on smoking and heart disease, as well as related simple activities; *Set a Better Example,* a poster showing a family with a father who is smoking; and *Are You Sending Smoke Signals?,* a poster showing a child's hand reaching for a lit cigarette. For more information, contact your local AHA office.

American Lung Association (ALA)
1740 Broadway
New York, New York 10019
(212) 315-8700

The American Lung Association, formerly the National Tuberculosis Association, is the oldest voluntary health organization in the United States. ALA's purpose is to control and prevent lung diseases and their causes, including cigarette smoking, air pollution, and occupational lung hazards.

The ALA offers a wide range of educational materials available through local ALA chapters or State Associations. These include the *No Smoking Kid's Magazine* (a coloring and activities book), a poster entitled *Be a Friend—Please Don't Smoke Here,* and a teaching kit with lung health modules for grades K-4. Each kit includes a teacher's guide, teaching posters and reproduction masters for activity sheets.

ALA films and videos include *Octopuff in Kumquat,* a 9-minute color film for preschool children and those in grades K-3. In this anti-smoking fable, an invading Octopuff character teaches a town to smoke, but then is converted by the children to become a nonsmoker. *Why People Smoke* is a 10-minute animated film for grades 2-5 that finds the four major "reasons" people smoke all very silly. *The Wizard of No,* an 18-minute film for grades 3-5, provides children with practical advice for building self-esteem and for saying no to tobacco, drugs and alcohol.

Other ALA materials provide adults with background information for talking with children about such issues as the health effects of involuntary smoking, ways to stop smokers, how to help a friend quit smoking, and techniques used to sell tobacco in America. For more information contact your nearest ALA chapter, or the New York office for a local referral.

American Lung Association of California
424 Pendleton Way
Oakland, California 94621
(415) 638-5864

This California affiliate of the ALA has developed special materials for the "Smoke-Free Family." These include t-shirts in child and adult sizes, pens, luggage tags, window decals, light plugs, paper coasters and a "Welcome to our Smoke-Free Home" bronze plaque. The *Smoke-Free Family Tree* is a worksheet available in English and Spanish on which children in grades K-3 can paste photos or draw pictures of their smoke-free family members and friends.

American Medical Association (AMA)
Department of Preventive Medicine
515 North State Street
Chicago, Illinois 60610
(312) 464-5000

The AMA is a voluntary organization founded over 150 years ago by professional physicians to promote the art and science of medicine. Contact the AMA for information about tobacco education materials designed for young children, including a new *Kids Against Tobacco* curriculum now being developed.

Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights (ANR)
2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite J
Berkeley, CA 94702
(415) 841-3032

The ANR is a voluntary organization formed to lobby for nonsmokers' rights. Legislative interests include restricting smoking in public places and limiting the access of minors to tobacco through better control of cigarette vending machines, restrictions on the free distribution of cigarettes to minors through special promotions, and licensure of establishments selling tobacco so that penalties can be imposed if tobacco is sold to minors. The ANR Foundation is an educational arm of the organization that works on the development of tobacco prevention programs for schools.

ANR offers model legislation and assistance to community members striving to pass ordinances for the protection of nonsmokers. In addition, ANR can answer questions on a variety of tobacco-related subjects. Upon request, ANR will send a catalog that lists publications and merchandise, an order form, and one complimentary copy of selected pamphlets.

Also contact ANR for information about *Growing Up in Smoke,* a book by Lynn Mitchell published by Pluto Press of London, England, in 1990. This book shares the experiences, thoughts and feelings of 658 Scottish children between 10 and 14 years of age about being forced to breathe smoke from other people's cigarettes.

Finally, *Secondhand Smoke,* a 16-minute film or video, was produced by Pyramid Film and Video in cooperation with ANR to teach children the harmful effects of involuntary smoking. The fact that many people do not find other people's cigarette smoke socially acceptable is emphasized. The film clearly identifies the tobacco industry as the only real opposition to nonsmokers' rights and calls for social action to protect nonsmokers. The film is distributed by Pyramid Film and Video, 2801 Colorado Avenue, Santa Monica, CA 90404, (213) 828-7577

The Badvertising Institute
195 Congress Street
Portland, Maine 04101
(207) 761-4414
(207) 773-3275 (bookstore)

The Badvertising Institute is a 1-person operation created by maverick artist Bonnie Vierthaler to teach children the politics behind the tobacco industry. Vierthaler was driven by the question: "Why do people smoke when they know it is so dangerous?"

In *The Joy of Smoking: A Spoof on Cigarette Advertising,* a series of 65 collages, she expresses her answer: "Tobacco ads manipulate people's emotions." By way of protest, she adds the missing truth to tobacco ads in a humorous way, such as pasting a pair of diseased lungs on the Marlboro Man.

Since 1986, the collages have been displayed in a variety of settings—parks, schools and shopping malls—including the Capitol's Rotunda in Washington, D.C. In 1987, 30,000 sets of 4 poster-sized prints were mailed to all U.S. schools across the U.S. To accomplish this mailing, she filled a gymnasium with posters and people on The Great American Smoke-Out day that November.

Copies of Vierthaler's collages (65 in all) can be obtained in the form of postcards, posters or slides by mail order. Call or write for a free brochure.

Doctors Ought to Care (DOC)
1423 Harper St.
Augusta, GA 30912
(404) 721-2739

DOC is a coalition of medical activists and other concerned individuals working to expose and counteract the promotion of tobacco and alcohol use and to educate the public, especially young people, about the major preventable causes of poor health and high medical costs. Among its many activities, DOC sponsors the Emphysema Slims Tennis Tournament, provides legislative testimony, and publishes a newsletter called *DOC News and Views.* Members of local chapters speak at schools, provide advertising to counter cigarette advertisements, and don white coats to make "house calls" at events where tobacco is being promoted.

Materials available through DOC include t-shirts with anti-smoking slogans, "out of order" stickers to place on cigarette vending machines, stickers for magazines that contain tobacco advertising, posters and bumper stickers, cardboard boomerangs enscribed *"Throw tobacco out of sports,"* and slide presentations with accompanying scripts.

National Cancer Institute (NCI)
Office of Cancer Communications (OCC)
Public Inquiries Office
9000 Rockville Pike
Building 31, Room 10A24
Bethesda, MD 20892-4200
(800) 422-6237

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) is the federal government's principal agency for conducting and supporting research on cancer. NCI is the largest of the 12 institutes that comprise the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. NCI coordinates a national research effort on cancer cause, prevention, detection, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and control.

Within NCI is a Cancer Information Service whose purpose is to supply information about cancer and cancer-related subjects to cancer patients and their families as well as to the general public. All calls are confidential and all printed materials are free of charge. This service has a bilingual and bicultural staff, and many materials are available in Spanish.

Specific materials for children related to the prevention of smoking and smokeless tobacco include *Chew or Snuff is Real Bad Stuff.* This pamphlet with information about the health effects of smokeless tobacco unfolds to reveal a poster on one side. It is accompanied by a guide for adults who want to make young people ages 10-18 aware of the dangers of using smokeless tobacco.

The OCC has published two guides to smoking programs for youth. *Smoking Programs for Youth* (NIH Publication No. 80-2156, June 1980) includes information on several smoking education programs for young children. *School Programs to Prevent Smoking: The National Cancer Institute Guide to Strategies that Succeed* (NIH Publication No. 90-500, January 1990) lists programs that research has shown to be most effective in smoking prevention. You are encouraged to call in your request for materials rather than writing to NCI.

National Health Information Clearinghouse (NHIC)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
P.O. Box 1133
Washington, DC 20013-1133
(301) 565-4167

The NHIC is a federally sponsored national center for health information that acts primarily as a referral service. Sponsored by the Office for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, the NHIC maintains a large database of national organizations concerned with health, diseases and related issues. Upon request, NHIC will send a guide listing these resources.

You also may call or write to NHIC with a request for specific information about tobacco or any health-related topic. NHIC will provide referrals to organizations that should be able to answer your questions. Requests for detailed information or information on multiple topics should be in writing.

National School Boards Association (NSBA)
1680 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 838-6722

The National School Boards Association, located in Alexandria, Virginia is a broadly-based, not-for-profit organization with three basic objectives: (1) advance the quality of education in the nation's public schools, (2) provide up-to-date information and training on education issues to NSBA Federation Members and their local school boards, and (3) strengthen local citizen control of schools, whereby education policy is determined by school boards directly accountable to the community through election or appointment.

NSBA's Federation Members are the associations of local school boards in the states, the Hawaii State Board of Education, and the boards of education in the District of Columbia and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The nation's 97,000 local school board members in more than 15,300 school districts determine the policies governing the education of 40 million children attending the elementary and secondary public schools in the United States. The NSBA publishes *No Smoking: A Board Member's Guide to Nonsmoking Policies for the Schools* (1987).

Office on Smoking and Health (OSH)
Public Information Branch
Centers for Disease Control
5600 Fishers Lane
Park Building, Room 1-18
Rockville, MD 20857
(301) 443-5287

The Office on Smoking and Health (OSH) is the national office on all smoking issues around the country. Write for a free booklet, *The Technical*

Information Center, which describes the publications and services of the office.

OSH conducts a wide range of public information activities to advise the American people about the hazards of smoking and tobacco use, and the benefits of smoking cessation. The primary goal is to discourage tobacco use among the American public and encourage people who use tobacco products to quit.

In addition to using TV and radio to deliver an anti-tobacco message to the American public, OSH offers materials including the annual Surgeon General's Report on Smoking and Health (fee), the summary of the Surgeon General's report (no fee), and other publications containing facts on smoking, addiction, cessation, teens and smoking, smoking and pregnancy, etc. Some materials are also available in Spanish.

Smoke-Free Class of 2000

The American Cancer Society, American Heart Association and the American Lung Association have teamed up to help youngsters who will graduate from high school in the year 2000 to grow up tobacco free.

Together they offer a packet of anti-smoking materials developed in consultation with Disney Educational Productions for the Smoke-Free Class of 2000. This packet includes a script for *The Land of Freshire,* an anti-smoking play for second grade students; discussion questions; suggested activities; and reproduction sheets for a headband, certificate of recognition, and student no-smoking pledge. Contact your local unit of one of these organizations for more information.

Stop Teenage Addiction to Tobacco (STAT)
121 Lyman Street, Suite 210
Springfield, MA 01103
(413) 732-7828

STAT was founded in 1985 with the goals of: (1) eliminating the sale of tobacco to minors, and (2) eliminating tobacco company efforts to encourage smoking. STAT's more than 5,000 members have conducted a wide variety of community-based programs to reduce minors' access to tobacco products and to restrict tobacco company advertising and promotion.

Resources provided by STAT include the *Tobacco and Youth Reporter*, a newsletter that reports on tobacco advertising and promotion, a *Replacement Smoker* poster, a five volume collection and analysis of cigarette advertising entitled *Sixty Years of Deception*, model legislation, fact sheets, position papers, and slide collections. STAT is organizing a nationwide network of activists to implement community-based strategies to reduce tobacco use by young people. A contribution in any amount will entitle you to a free newsletter subscription.

About the Author

Carol N. D'Onofrio is Associate Professor of Public Health at the University of California, Berkeley. Throughout her career she has been active in the development, implementation, and evaluation of policy, research and educational initiatives to promote the public's health. Since 1980 she has directed or codirected three large-scale research projects that together have directly involved over 25,000 children and youth in studies of tobacco use prevention. As part of this work, she has collaborated with academic colleagues, teachers, adult volunteers and young people in developing, field-testing, and disseminating: *Risk and Youth: Smoking (RAY:S)* a school-based curriculum for students in grades 7-9; a short version of *RAY:S* for use with the film, *Death in the West;* and the *Project 4-Health Tobacco Education Program,* a program for 4-H club members between 10 and 14 years of age.

D'Onofrio currently serves on the Board of Scientific Counselors for the National Cancer Institute's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control, and on the Board of Trustees of Alta Bates/Herrick Hospital. Prior positions include Vice-Chair of the Academic Senate at the University of California, Berkeley, and Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees for the Northern California Cancer Center.

LOOKING FOR RESOURCES ON EDUCATING YOUNG CHILDREN ABOUT DIFFICULT ISSUES?

**"Does AIDS Hurt?"
Educating Young
Children About AIDS**
149 pgs./paper, $14.95

**Smiling at Yourself:
Educating Young
Children About Stress
and Self-Esteem**
150 pgs./paper, $14.95

**Am I in Trouble?
Using Discipline to
Teach Young Children
Responsibility**
145 pgs./paper, $14.95

**Tobacco Talk:
Educating Young
Children About
Tobacco**
150 pgs./paper, $14.95

**Call Toll-Free 1 (800) 321-4407 For More Information or Write,
ETR Associates/Network Publications, Sales Department,
PO Box 1830 , Santa Cruz, CA 95061-1830**

CALL TOLL-FREE 1(800) 321-4407 FOR MORE INFORMATION AND A FREE CATALOG ON THESE AND MANY MORE BOOKS, VIDEOS AND PAMPHLETS

Tobacco Talk provides caring adults with specific suggestions and sound advice for talking with children to age 10 about the health and social hazards of tobacco use. This practical handbook focuses on educating children through a series of informal conversations, helping them unscramble mixed messages they get from society about smoking and chewing tobacco. *Tobacco Talk* provides:

- simple, accurate ways to explain complex tobacco information to young children
- honest, sensitive responses to young children's common questions about smoking and chewing tobacco
- important background information about children's attitudes and beliefs about tobacco use
- fresh ideas for enhancing adult-child communication.

Tobacco Talk can be used as a guide for teachers participating in tobacco education programs, or as a helping hand for parents and care providers who want children to stay healthy and tobacco-free.

ISBN 1-56071-052-7
51495>
9 781560 710523

Network Publications, a division of ETR Associates
Santa Cruz, CA

$14.95